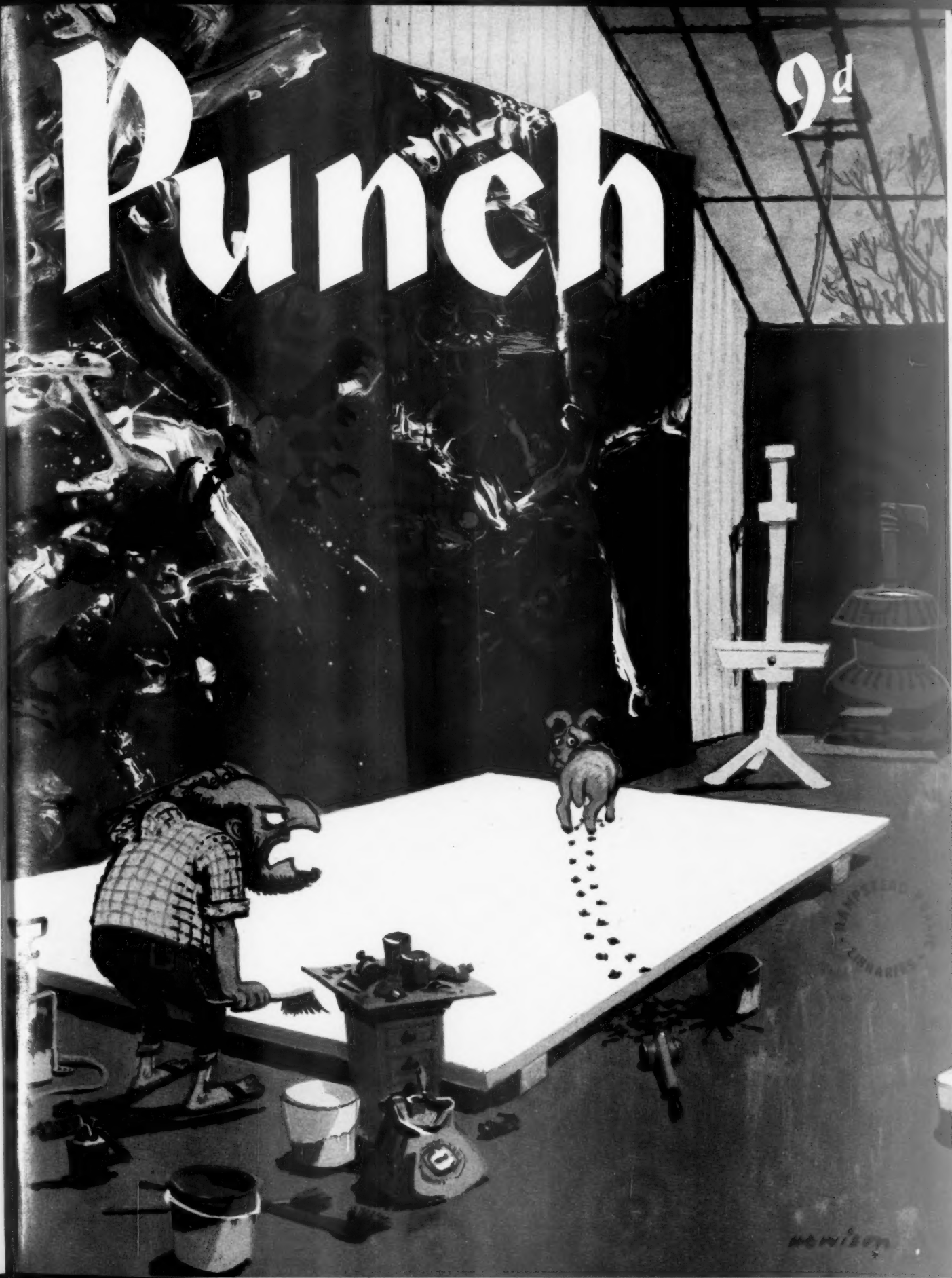


Punch

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Times, February 11 1959

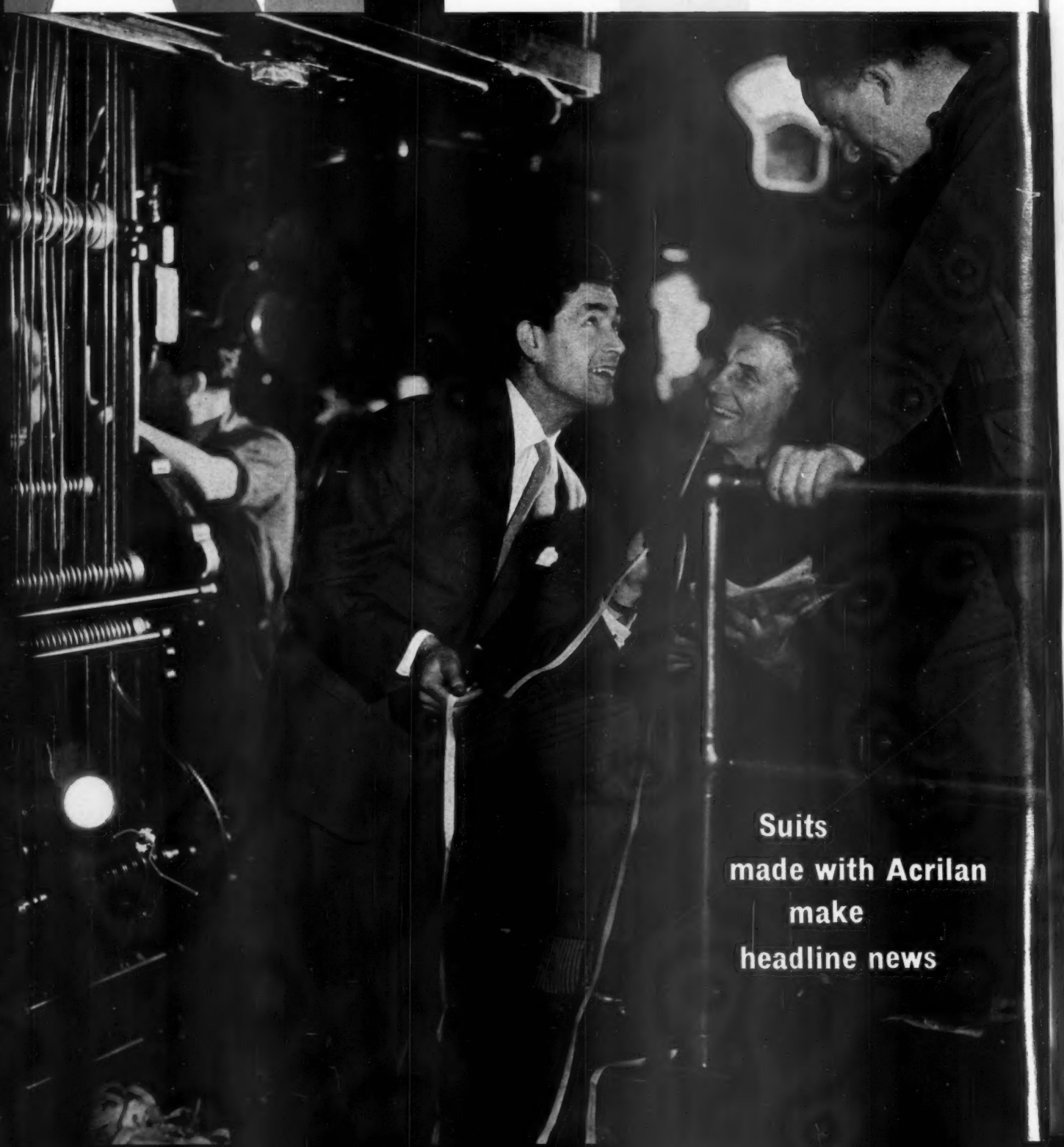
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PUNCH

Vol. CCXXXVI No. 6183

FEBRUARY 11 1959



Articles

- 212 GEORGE SCHWARTZ
The New Book of Snobs : The City
215 H. F. ELLIS
Back to Windy Troy
217 R. G. G. PRICE
Scales Even
219 HELENE DARREL
Peril in the Fog
224 J. B. BOOTHROYD
Policy Moves, Latest
238 MONICA FURLONG
Love Among the Lords

Verse

- 218 PETER DICKINSON
The Island Counter
221 KEITH STYLES
Long Live the American Musical
225 E. V. MILNER
Science Specialist
230 FLORENCE PROCTOR
In England's Bright and Pleasant Land

Fiction

- 226 CLAUD COCKBURN
We're Strangers Here Ourselves—3

Features

- 222 VINDICTIVE VALENTINES
228 FOR WOMEN
230 TOBY COMPETITIONS
231 ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT
Percy Somerset
232 IN THE CITY
Lombard Lane
232 IN THE COUNTRY
Wilfred McNeilly
239 SPORTING PRINTS
Hewison : Norman O'Neill

Criticism

- 233 BOOKING OFFICE
R. G. G. Price : The Psychologist of Sex
235 THEATRE (Eric Keown)
236 FILMS (Richard Mallett)
237 RADIO (Henry Turton)

Subscriptions

If you wish to have *Punch* sent to your home each week, send £2 16s. 0d.* to the Publisher, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

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G

The London Charivari

A KNOCK on the door may mean a man selling brushes, a Jehovah's Witness or somebody sent by Mr. Colin Hurry to ask what you think about the steel business. No one, especially in a marginal constituency, need feel lonely these days. It is odd that both supporters and opponents of the survey assume that the vast proportion of those questioned will answer. If the public patiently give their views whenever they are asked because they feel this can affect what happens to them, that seems healthy enough. If they give their views because they like talking or because the canvasser looks appealing, well and good. But what worries me is the thought that some of them may wrinkle brows and try to invent views because they imagine the inquiry is official and that they have to—a kind of development of jury service or giving evidence or filling in the census form. Polls ought to be licenced by the police, like flag-days.

Poll Apart

INCIDENTALLY, I am driven to wonder who but Mr. Morgan Phillips could have



described a £750,000 door-to-door survey of two million voters by two hundred steel films as "furtive."

Small Change

ONE well-publicized feature of Liverpool's drive-in bank is a

"specially-installed drawer," which only shows to what lengths a forward-looking bank will go when it thinks it is on to something good. No doubt the Premises Department, always thrifty, wanted to go through their stocks for some ordinary, old-fashioned, walk-in type drawer not calling for special installation. What seems clear, despite this revolution in British banking, is that the other kind of drawer, motorized or not, will find little difference. His cheques are as likely to be referred to him as ever.

Don't Just Lie There

FALLS on polished floors have been found to be "a major hazard" in British hospitals, and there is now a



move for them all to have non-slip floors. People who dissent from what is and is not the major hazard hope for early news of a non-slip operating theatre.

Crotchets and Quavers

WHERE is the fighting spirit of British youth? In Milan, when a musical critic ventures the opinion that Mme. Callas's performance in Donizetti's *Anna Bolena* is "amateurish hamming," he and his editor are swiftly haled before the bench and swingeing penalties, which sound all the more swingeing when expressed in Italian currency, are demanded. (Vainly, however as it turned out.) Yet when at the Lyceum Mr. Cliff Richard, who in his own line enjoys a standing not

unlike Mme. Callas's in hers, is pelted with lamp-shades, bottles, eggs, tomatoes and cries of "You're not a real friend of rock 'n' roll boys," all that happens is that the revolving stage is revolved to get him out of range, and nervous laryngitis sets in which compels his manager (to my great disappointment) to cancel his engagements for the rest of the week. I'd say that if "amateurish hamming" was estimated at 100,000 lire, "no friend to rock 'n' roll" was worth putting in a claim for. With rock 'n' roll at its current value, I suggest something like £100,000.

Silver Wraith?

A REPORT from Singapore says that ghosts are on sale in Malaya, and old women will say "I've bought a poltergeist" with as much pride as an Englishman might say "I've bought a Rolls." Or, for that matter, "I've bought a poltergeist."

Stupid Cupid

NOW that a London jeweller is to market a "going steady" ring to bridge the gap between friendship and betrothal I can foresee openings for any amount of other similar tokens. A Recently Estranged scarf-pin springs to mind, and if other examples are needed I would urge the claims of a Temporarily Shelved brooch, Wife in Name Only earrings, an Open to Offers badge, an On Honeymoon bracelet, a Second On the List tie-clip, and an I Hate You necklace. Meanwhile I see no reason why the Going Steady ring shouldn't catch on and come at last to be regarded not as a jeweller's bright idea, but as an essential part of the emotional trappings of modern man. After all, look what happened to such basically commercial propositions as Valentines, Christmas Cards, Mother's Day, or even (let's face it) engagement rings.

Are Shirts Human?

I SIMPLY cannot make out what is happening to our shirts. The production manager of a Retford cleaning firm says that a certain drip-dry shirt must be washed each time it is worn because it suffers from "protein degradation through contact with the human skin." Moreover, by rapidly becoming electrically charged, it attracts a good deal of dirt. Current advertisements of the laundry trade only increase

my mystification as to whether shirts are animal, vegetable or mineral. One firm markets a new "organic chelating agent" which rids shirts of "undesirable complexes." Another advertiser seeks to impregnate shirts with a "fluorescer" which absorbs ultra-violet rays and reflects them as a bluish light. The shirt on our back emerges as a Thing—a Thing with a yearning for dirt (*nostalgie de la boue*?) but yet capable of shining with a sublime radiance. What worries me is, do we suffer from protein degradation through wearing it?

Adeste Fideles

NEWS that a bomb was thrown into ten thousand revolutionary thanksgiving marchers in Havana impressed me chiefly with the fact that Cubans are still celebrating. With any luck they look like keeping it up until the next revolution, when they can adapt any celebration as required by a simple change of banners.

Government for the People

IF the Government is going in for admass propaganda I don't see why the National Savings Committee should hog all the limelight with "Ernie's Happy Snap-Album," in which laughing Premium Bond winners tell of their hopes and dreams. There is plenty of scope elsewhere. Far too little is known of the lucky breaks to be had from, say, the Livestock Improvement, Hill Farming and Slaughterhouse Policy Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries

and Food. Fortright photographs of ultramontane yeomen above some such caption as "That was a right tidy sheep-fence I got out of the subsidy" would make a welcome change from giggling housewives. The blank space in the snap-album might be reserved for "You too can get aid for your abattoir."

Brooklyn Dodgers

RED-BLOODED New Yorkers, already shaken by Mr. Nelson Rockefeller's disclosure that "more Americans go to concerts than to baseball games," were frankly horrified when he went on to launch an appeal for "American music month."

Rooted to the Spot

THE R.S.P.C.A.'s ever-useful hints on animal welfare in cold weather include instructions on how to release chickens and other birds which have become frozen to the ground; they should be freed with the aid of warm water. It is odd that no press photographer has ever captured this magical moment—the kindly, muffled householder with the kettle, the grateful bird raising its foot delicately from the melting mire. But then press photographers were rarely on the spot in days when small boys used to get their tongues frozen to railings. That, incidentally, is something which never seems to happen nowadays. Has youth lost all spirit of adventure, of natural curiosity? Apparently the N.S.P.C.C. finds it unnecessary to issue annual instructions on how to deal with this problem.

Home from Home

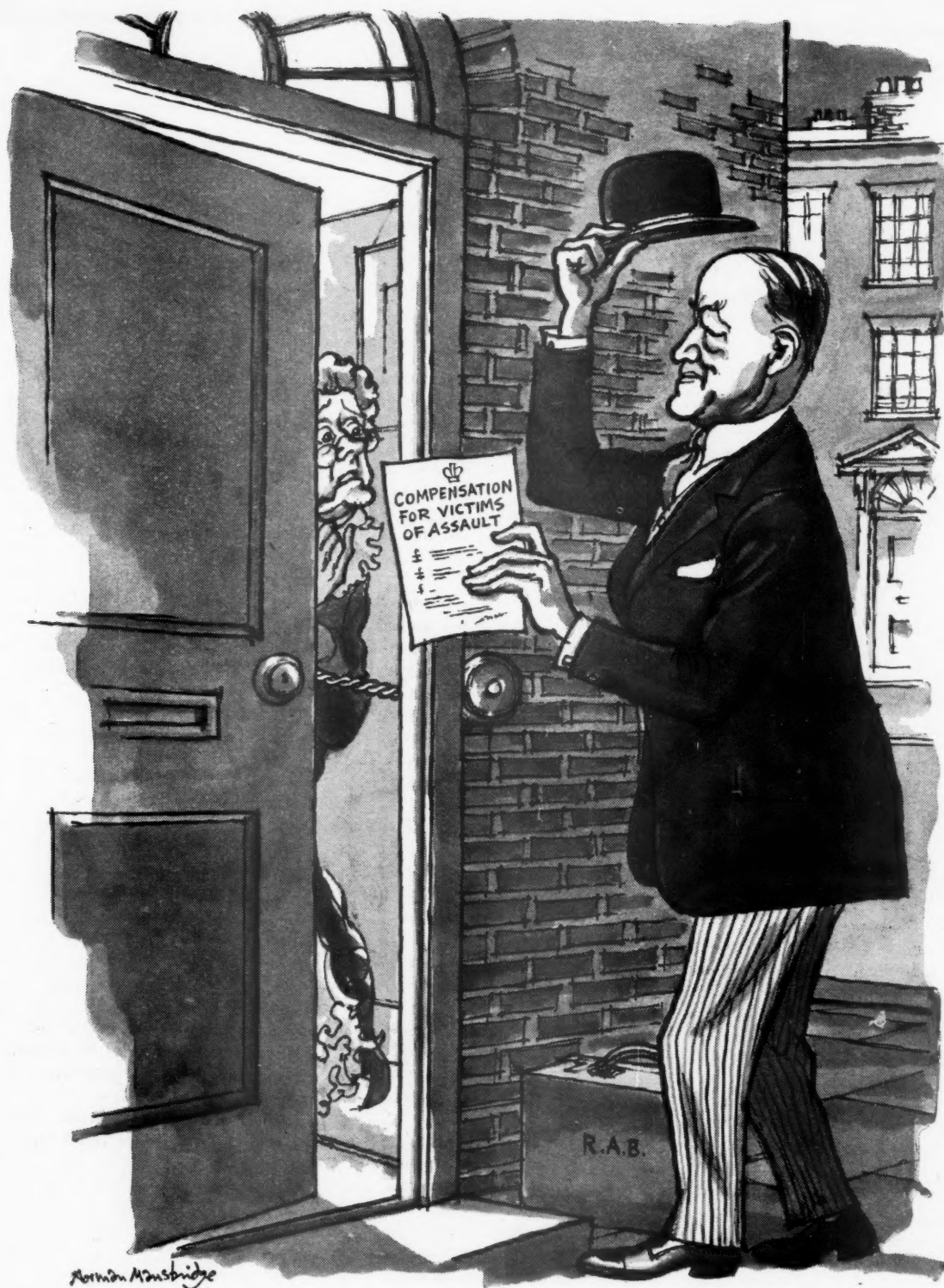
A NIGHT-CLUB pianist of my acquaintance and no mean skill is playing at a new club in Wardour Street, run, he says vaguely, by a couple of architects. Food excellent, service agreeable, but so many empty tables that my friend hardly likes to take his fee. "Do the architects eat there?" I asked him. He said "Always. But that's because they can't afford to eat out."

— MR. PUNCH



"Lights out includes guitars."

SPORTING PRINTS
The ninth of Hewison's drawings of sporting personalities appears on page 239. The subject is
NORMAN O'NEILL



"Couldn't I have a few more policemen instead?"

THE NEW BOOK OF SNOBS



In 1846-7 Thackeray wrote "*The Snobs of England*" in *PUNCH*, later reprinted as "*The Book of Snobs*." In this series snobbery is brought up to date, but the title decorations are from Thackeray's own drawings.

GEORGE SCHWARTZ on The City



NEVER mind about manifestations of snobbery in the fripperies of life. Let's get down to business, real business, the City. How much snobbery is there to the square mile where the money barons were formerly enthroned on their seats of gold and, if we are to believe Mr. Gaitskell, are, after too short an interregnum, working their passage back on the convertibility wagon?

A potent source of snobbery is the conviction that you know all the answers, and fifty years ago the City knew all the answers. It had a short way with unauthorized outsiders who asked any questions. "Those who matter know. Those who don't know, don't matter." This devastating snub confined City news strictly to the financial page, which was hardly on speaking terms with the rest of the paper. The sore memory of this still impels Fleet Street to refer to its City office as the bucket-shop.

In the old days, *circa* 1900, the nation was still earning its living with a fine disregard for the fact that it was running an economic system as well. There must have been a National Income even then, but no one was in charge of it. If the hidden hand threw up a favourable balance the City promptly took hold of it and invested it abroad, without the slightest intention of giving aid to the under-developed areas. In 1913 the current equivalent of £800 million went overseas on strictly business terms, without consultation of the Treasury, the T.U.C., or anyone else west of Temple Bar. There was an exclusive snobbishness about these dealings that would horrify

opinion to-day, now that everything has to proceed under a set of initials with a detergent flavour, such as EX/IMP, U.N.I.S.C.A.N., or N.A.T.S.O.P.A.

Formerly if you didn't know the meaning of contangos, backwardations, and Manitoba No. 1 futures, the City couldn't be bothered to explain. Those who mattered knew. Nowadays there is no inside information in the City. It all comes from outside, and so does the jargon. For a century or more the bankers were content to jog along with a cash balance. Now they learn that they were operating a liquidity ratio, and talking that prose all along without knowing it. If the City wants to know what it is doing it has to read *The Economist*. Even if it doesn't want to know what it shouldn't be doing it is told so by the City Editor of the *Daily Express*. That it has all the conceit knocked out of it was shown by its meek submission to the dictates of the Capital Issues Committee. When all the rest of the country was in revolt against the arbitrary decisions of tribunals, the City, which was wont to call out the train bands in defence of its liberties, tamely conformed to the rulings of this Star Chamber. This is not merely a descent from snobbishness; it is a fall from grace.

In the search for snobbishness and lofty conceit on financial issues the bus over London Bridge is off the route. The Left intellectuals now exercise all the suzerainty, and it is a lucky stock-broker who has a boy at the university who can tell father to stick to his micro-economics and leave macroeconomics to his betters. The gospel is no longer to be read in the annual statements of the Chairmen of the Joint Stock Banks; it

has to be sought in the text-books on *Income and Social Accounting*, *Input-Output Analysis*, *The General Principles of Resource Allocation*, and in academic notes on the *Balanced Budget Multiplier* and *Elasticity Pessimism in International Trade*. These should be prescribed reading for merchant bankers and the investment departments of the insurance institutions. In default the critics make all the running, and the City is left to work convertibility in the knowledge that Mr. Gaitskell has damned it on behalf of the Winchester and New College school of thought. No one within a half-mile radius of the Bank knows how to secure full employment, a stable currency, an expanding economy and a rising standard of living. The



solution is common knowledge to any reader of the *New Statesman*.

If there is any snobbery in the City to-day it would be subsumed under the previous articles in this series. If you are to lunch with jobbers or bankers there is no need to check on the latest Treasury Bill rate or the state of the copper market, but it is advisable to have some idea of what's showing at the Redfern Gallery, who's conducting at Festival Hall, what chance there is of picking up a Queen Anne snuffers tray or a Louis XV marquetry writing table, and above all to pretend to some knowledge of the nice conduct of a 12-ton sloop. This is talking shop. The B.B.C. can deal with the balance of payments after the nine o'clock news.

What's left but the black jacket and the all-white shirt and collar, sombre emblems of a discredited capitalist order and beneath the note of James Laver? Hence the apologetic use of the Bank Rate, with the assurance that no harm is intended except to the little gnomes in Zurich and Amsterdam. Hence the unresolved problem of the Geophysical Year whether the globe pivots around Threadneedle Street or Great George Street. Hence, probably, the enduring confusion of the No. 11 buses. They don't know whether they are coming or going.

Any survey of the changed behaviour of the City must excite some wonder that the place is still a going concern. The forty-five years since 1914 have played havoc with many institutions and annulled the role of many centres. Critics on the Left can still question the value of the City's functions and even portray them as inimical to the interests of the economy at large. If the City is aware of this it still persists in many of its ancient ways, and, no longer taking its prestige for granted, still maintains it. The Bank may be a creature of the Chancellor, but Chancellors come and go, leaving the traditional aura of the Bank unchanged. The paper currency is still dignified as a bank note, for somehow the populace never took to it as a Treasury note. The Old Lady is still thought of as clad in bombazine, but if this lends an air of stuffiness to her demeanour we can be thankful that the poke-bonnet has never been replaced by the Phrygian cap. For the pound, after all its battering, is still a pound, and not a dirty piece of paper, on the luggage



label standard. This may be due to obstinacy, not wisdom, but it has served.

Pomposity, to say nothing of snob-bishness, does not attach to the City to-day. To be put on the defensive after a long era of magisterial self-esteem is a salutary experience, and the City has had a chastening. It is indeed the hub of our monetary economy, but it should never have pretended that it knew all about money. Money was a great human invention but it is a potent source of human confusion and likely to remain so. It has been remarked that three things will drive men mad—love, ambition, and the study of currency problems. When everything is reckoned in money, money becomes the great solvent, the cure-all for every economic

insufficiency, and the purveyors of monetary nostrums abound in every age. Perhaps the Edwardian period was a golden interlude in that respect. The bimetallic controversy had died down in the early 'nineties, ostensibly because of new gold discoveries but more probably because it had exhausted the human intellect. Anyone who fancies himself as a monetary expert should be put on a diet of bimetallism. For two decades after that, finance was on a plumb wicket, and the City was riding high, wide, and handsome.

Then came the deluge, and with the advent of a war economy the people who had worked the money machine with amazing efficiency revealed a lamentable ignorance of the real processes at work. Inflation was born out



"Oh—about here, I should think."

of the notion that you can raise soldiers by raising loans, and the pundits in the City certainly did not provide the answer to that. The financial world here did stagger to its feet after the first war, but the Great Depression nearly sank the reputation of the City, and the second war nearly sank the capitalist order.

The City is therefore grateful to-day to anyone who can explain its functions in language understood of the people. The snobbish air that attaches to any mystery no longer obtains. There is a public gallery in the Stock Exchange and the man in the street is welcome to the market at £5 a go. Insurance may be actuarial wizardry, but the public has to be informed that the reserves belong to the policy-holders and do not represent loot for the proprietors. You wouldn't have got a thank-you for that service in the old days. Those who mattered knew.

Albeit there is something more than

the black coat and the white shirt. The City keeps its word and answers letters by return of post—two very necessary things for economic salvation. It is curious that the City has never been snobbish about that. Its prestige derives from these two attributes which set the tone for the whole economic and social order. The City will never be free from occasional outbursts of tycoonery, but they won't carry the arrogant effrontery of past episodes. You might regard this as a case of convertibility.

I should add a final word on the recent brouhaha in the City over British Aluminium, which must have given some puzzled observers the notion that they were witnessing a display of Gentlemen *v.* The Rest in the Eton Wall Game. It would be charitable to assume that some of the pontifical intervention was due not to snobbery but to a sudden rush of blood to heads not yet quite clear of wartime and post-war distractions.

It is, however, appropriate to remark that while the City represents the British way of life, it is not responsible for it, and certainly not in charge of it. Even Whitehall has to tread delicately in this matter. Also to add that the enduring fame of the City is that it has in its time poked its financial nose into every corner of the earth, thereby disqualifying itself from complaining about foreign economic invasion of any territory, including our own. Not all the institutions in question came over with William the Conqueror, and if Lombard Street has long since worn tweeds or the tartan with a native air, the name is still a reminder.

CRADLE TO UNIVERSITY

A series of articles dealing with the attitudes and problems of youth and of those responsible for its upbringing starts next week

Back to Windy Troy

By H. F. ELLIS

IT will be another two years, so they say, before the great Russo-Greek film of the *Iliad* can be ready for release. But the planning stages are far advanced, the selection of actors (there are to be thirty-seven leading and about forty-five supporting players) has begun, the screen-play prepared by Mr. Nikolai Ochlopkoff (believed to be a Russian) has been scrutinized and approved by Mr. Marinatos, Professor of Archaeology and Dean of the University of Athens, and by August or thereabouts the cameras will begin to turn. It is an enormously exciting project, rich in speculative possibilities.

The film, so says the Greek producer Mr. Zervos, is to be "a faithful interpretation of the *Iliad*." This will be Homer's story. Apparently the original idea for the film was, in part at least, prompted by a wish to counter-balance a recent film of the Trojan War, made in more westerly regions, which "strangely" (I am quoting *The Times* now) "gave the Trojan rather than the Greek version of the great epic." Agamemnon and Menelaus were there represented as evil warmongers on a piratical expedition against the peace-loving Trojans, and the film "provoked" according to *The Times*, "great resentment in Greece." One can understand that. Even the docile British would complain if the exploits of King Arthur were presented from a Saxon point of view, or Robin Hood were portrayed skulking, however CinemaScopically, in the greenwood through the eyes of the Sheriff of Nottingham. It is natural* that the Greeks, always a rather touchy race, should prefer to see Agamemnon and Menelaus in their more familiar role as avengers of the rape of Helen. But a *faithful* interpretation of the *Iliad*? There are difficulties there.

Difficulties, that is, for anyone with the susceptibilities of a Greek audience in mind. Homer did his best to tell his

story from a Greek point of view, but he so obviously preferred the Trojans. Hector is easily the pick of the whole bunch on those windy plains. Priam is an old dear. Andromache, if one may take the liberty, is a sweetie. But with whom, from all the name-parts in the Achæan host, would one care to share a walking-tour? Which of them do Mr. Zervos and Mr. Ochlopkoff propose to select as their hero? Not Achilles, for goodness' sake? This sulking egocentric non-co-operator, unchivalrous in combat and barbarous in victory, makes good screen material. His appearance on the rampart and the three great shouts that thrice threw the Trojans into confusion and made even the beautiful maned steeds turn their chariots backwards ("for they presaged sorrows in their mind") are admirable cinema. But Achilles is a tough, not a hero. Agamemnon is altogether too indecisive and footling. Menelaus is

rather a dim figure, and a cuckold at that. Ajax the Telamonian—now there was a man. But it would be falsifying the *Iliad* to give him the leading role; and the same applies to Ulysses, whose greatest exploits (including the Wooden Horse) are post-*Iliad*.

There are other problems for a producer determined to follow Homer faithfully. The climax can only be the combat between Achilles and Hector, and nine-tenths of it is broad comedy. Hector, it will be remembered, took to his heels before the fight began and ran three times round the walls of Troy with Achilles in hot pursuit. This was good tactics, for Achilles had been out of training for weeks and Hector, as Mr. Robert Graves points out somewhere, no doubt thought that a good run in full armour would soften him up. But it is all wrong visually for a cinema show-down. Conceive the effect in a Western, if one of the two parties in the final



"Goodness!... is it that late already?"

*At least I suppose it is natural, if they like to regard Troy as non-Greek. The old Athenians had a story that Teucer, first king of Troy, emigrated from their city. Certainly the Trojans seem to have spoken pretty good Greek. When the heroes of both sides harangued each other on the battlefield, as they frequently did, Homer nowhere suggests that interpreters stood by.



"All I can say is we have no intention of letting it change our way of life."

gun-fight ran three times round the town before consenting to draw. It is all very well for Homer to say "A brave man, indeed, fled before, but a much braver swiftly pursued him." It would not look like that to an audience. And even when combat is finally joined the situation is not much better. Achilles throws his spear at Hector. Hector ducks, makes a short speech and throws *his* spear at Achilles. It bounces off Achilles' shield (Messrs. Ochlopkoff and Zervos had better be careful here; we old classical hacks who have read Book XVIII know exactly what that shield looked like) and Hector is moved

to make a second, rather pessimistic, oration. Meanwhile, Pallas Athene in her interfering way has plucked Achilles' spear from the ground and restored it to its owner. What does Achilles do now? Does he chivalrously permit Hector to recover his ill-directed dart, so that Round Two may be begun on equal terms? He does not. He simply whips his own spear into Hector at the part where the collar-bones separate the neck from the shoulders and where (as Homer well remarks) the destruction of life is most speedy. And that, bar two or three extremely offensive speeches from Achilles, is that. The grand

climactic contest is over. It only remains for a crowd of lesser Greek heroes to dash up and thrust their weapons into the corpse of the Trojan leader, after which the well-born son of Peleus, having threaded leather thongs through the tendons of Hector's feet . . . But enough. One cannot believe that this scene, faithfully interpreted, is going to go down really well in the Odeons of modern Athens.

And another thing. How do the producers propose to handle the intervention of the gods? The temptation to leave them out altogether must be very strong, but the plain fact is that if you exclude the tiresome and innumerable instances of divine interference the whole course of the struggle before Troy becomes unintelligible. The only commander with any coherent Master Plan at all is Zeus, and there is much to be said for seeing the whole campaign through his eyes. A short talk at the start from the old cloud-gatherer, perhaps in front of a simple map, would help to set the scene, and a running commentary from him during the battle sequences would clarify many a chaotic incident. "Now if you look carefully towards the left of the screen," one hears him saying, "you will notice that horse-taming Diomedes has just been wounded by a dart from Pandarus. Perspiration has afflicted him too, beneath the broad belt of his well-orbed shield, as when a handmaiden, tending her flocks on the slopes of Mt. Ida . . . But never mind that now. It looks to me as if Diomedes would take no further part to-day. Now look! There goes Pallas Athene, right in the thick of it, upbraiding Diomedes and actually jumping up into his chariot. I *told* her to mind her own business. That's Ares coming up at a gallop and a fine to-do there will be if the son of Tydeus wounds him in his immortal flank. There! It's happened. Looking a little to your right . . ."

It occurs to me, at this point, to wonder in which language all the gods and deathless heroes will make their utterances. Russian? Modern Greek? The old Ionic? Of course in a way it doesn't matter. We old classical hacks will rely on the sub-titles, like the rest of you. But I should prefer on the whole not to hear the kind of noises Mr. Mikoyan makes escaping the barrier of Agamemnon's teeth.

Scales Even

By R. G. G. PRICE

(A tribute to the papers that balance praise and blame so fairly in the Correspondence Columns.)

YESTERDAY my wife and I caught the 10.16 a.m. from Rugby to Fowey. The carriage windows were so dirty that I had to use my pen-knife to clean them and the communication cord was rusty. We sat six a side and there was no heating. Outside Norwich there was a three-quarters of an hour delay. When we entered the station I leaned out and asked a porter what was happening but he turned away with a derisive gesture. It was not until we arrived at Euston early this morning that we heard that our carriage had been attached in error to

the Saturday slow from Stafford to Ipswich. At no stage of the journey was any information given to passengers and at the terminus I was charged excess fares. When, cold and weary, I got out at last there was nobody to handle my luggage, which included packing-cases, and when I asked for a cup of tea at the buffet I was told, in a fake American accent, that tea was "off."

K. L. HAWK-HATHERLY

The other day I got out of the train at a small country station thinking I had plenty of time to buy a paper but the

train went off leaving me on the platform. The railway staff could not have been kinder. The station-master took me to his home for a good meal. Then his brother-in-law got out his pony-and-trap and drove me eleven miles over snowy moorland roads to the junction where the traffic superintendent stopped the boat train for me. It took me as far as a level crossing where a bus, warned by telephone, was waiting, which got me to the main line station in time to catch the train after the one I missed. I do feel I must pay a public tribute to the efficiency and courtesy of British Railways.

PHYLLIS SPARKE

The postman has just delivered a letter from a friend half a mile away that was posted six weeks ago. It bears the postmarks of Leeds, Antigua and the Isle of Arran. How would the Post Office manage if it had to meet competition?

K. L. HAWK-HATHERLY



"Honest, I'd been reading the bit in the White Paper on overcrowding."

This morning I was taking some letters to the post when I dropped one. Somebody must have picked it up and posted it for me because when I got home this evening there was the reply waiting for me. How is that for service?

PHYLLIS SPARKE

I have a small medlar tree at the end of my garden. Every year it is stripped by gangs of boys who lie in wait for the fruit to ripen. Hardly a week goes by without a window being broken by bricks. It is no uncommon sight to see boys fighting on my drive with knives. My wife, who has twice been penetrated by missiles from airguns, dreads being subjected to filthy language whenever she goes out. A friend of mine was tarred and feathered on a late night bus. It is simply lack of discipline that has produced this brutish generation.

K. L. HAWK-HATHERLY

The other day I tripped and fell at the cross-roads. Luckily there were a number of young people about, as there usually are, and I shall never forget the kindness I received from them. They gave me first aid for shock and bruises, as they had learned to do at their club, and insisted on taking me home. Although I am quite fit to look after myself they would not hear of it. They have organized rotas and there are always three in the cottage, cooking, cleaning and mending. A group of boys

are making me a radiogram out of old television sets and next week the girls are putting on a performance of *The Man of Destiny* to cheer me up. I think our youth are wonderful!

PHYLLIS SPARKE

Returning from a holiday in sunnier and more hospitable countries I landed at Dover in a fog. The customs shed smelled of sulphur and disinfectant and when the customs officers finally arrived their attitude was both supercilious and menacing. Although I handed my own inquisitor a typed list of all the purchases I had made abroad, he turned the contents of my cases upside down without offering to repack. He also probed my shaving-stick. His assessment of duties appeared to be quite arbitrary and, when I objected to being charged on a bottle of liqueur which I did not propose to consume myself but to give as a present to a friend, I thought for a moment he was going to hit me.

K. L. HAWK-HATHERLY

After the thrill of seeing the white cliffs of Dover you really do know you are home when you see our smart, courteous customs officers. This year I had bought rather more presents than I could really afford and I feared what was left of my spending money would be taken up by paying the duty. However, the officer never even opened my luggage and merely scrawled the mystic symbols on it with a friendly

grin. Then, to my delighted surprise, he carried my four heavy cases to the train, put me in a corner seat and bought me a copy of the *Spectator*.

PHYLLIS SPARKE

Now we are to be prevented from sitting in front of a cosy, flaming coal fire and forced . . .

K. L. HAWK-HATHERLY

I do think it is such a good thing to stop all that dreadful smoke. I would much rather have a nice warm stove than just lumps of stone smouldering in the grate . . .

PHYLLIS SPARKE

The Island Counter

Thoughts stimulated by the fiftieth anniversary of Mr. F. W. Woolworth's opening his first English store in Liverpool

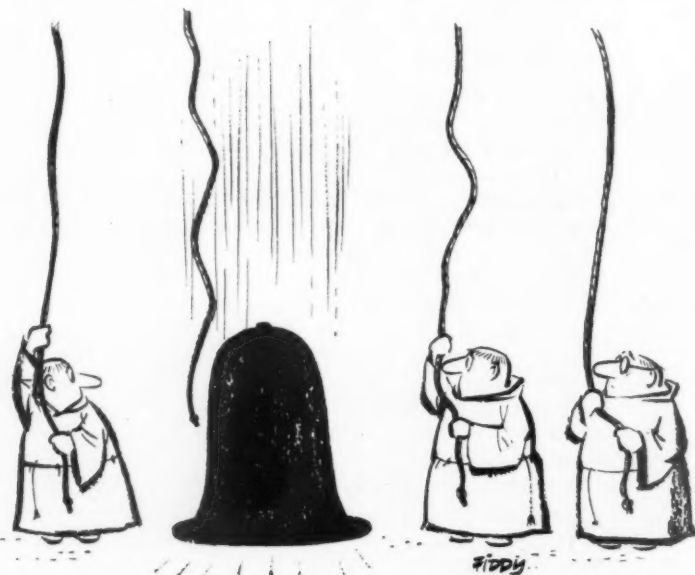
AT island counters Woolworth girls
In gangways narrow as a mind
Sold chocolates and raspberryade,
Buttons and imitation pearls;
And sometimes, watching them behind
Their undisputed barricade
Of shiny, brown mahogany,
I used to think "Ah me! Ah me!"

The knuts are vanished with the war
Who walked the Liverpoolian ways
When Mr. Woolworth set up shop
But still in thought come storming o'er
The tidy, price-bedizened trays;
And still the management, to stop
Such ghostly forays, keeps its wenches
Within the shelter of these trenches."

Another war is come and gone—
With it the "6d" once embossed
So splendidly in red and gold.
But still that ghostly war goes on,
With little conquered, little lost,
But slightly different from of old,
Fought out on the uncluttered floors
Of shiny, new self-service stores

Under the cover of great banks
Of tins. It must seem rather strange
To every ghostly, wandering knut
Watching the trolleys move like tanks.
The symbols of the sex-war change
To suit a changing era, but,
Seeing the island counter go,
I feel a slight access of woe.

— PETER DICKINSON





"Back again, Mrs. Philpott?"

Peril in the Fog

Another curious contribution from

HELENE DARREL

THE dance was not much good after all even though Lord Blocks and his sextet were playing, and Sibyl my girlfriend who works with me (only in the selfservice downstairs naturally not having the chick way of dressing I have. And you need chick you know. I remember at school our headmistress used to say with smiling meaningful glances at me "Some people have it and some just dont." And it was nice of her not to point at the other poor things dont you think?) told me the man on the drums was a living doll.

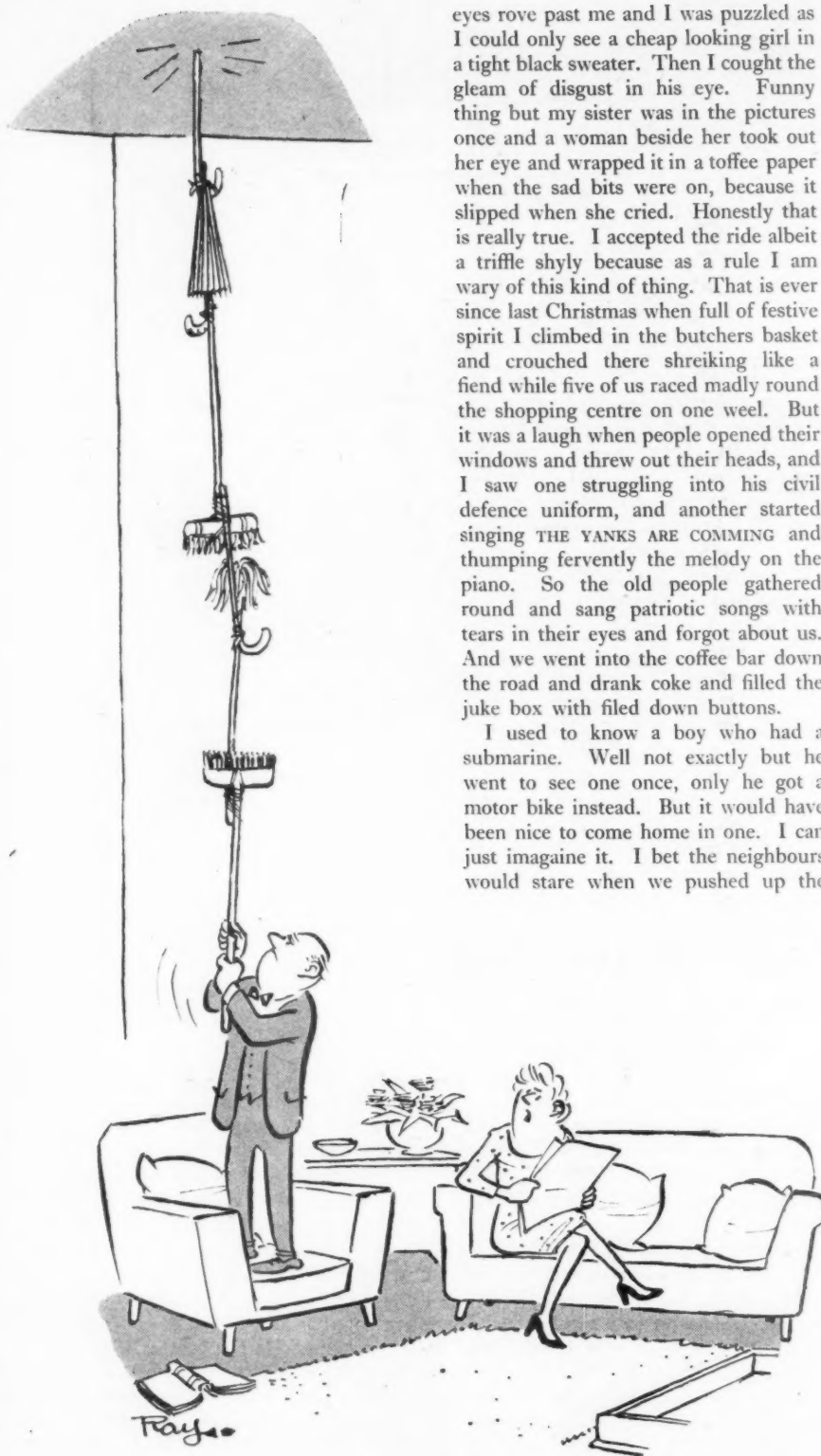
But actually he was a bit off I thought on account of the fact that when he was carried away by the rhythm I

realized he was quite bald. For you see the lock of hair he had drawn across with such devilish cunning and stuck down with a concealed hair slide fell away and hung to his shoulder. So with the bald bit in the middle he looked like my brother wearing his Davie Crochet hat. Also he did not wear one of those terrific check shirts like the old one but a sort of jacket with two bits hanging at the back as if it hadnt been finished properly.

It apeers he wanted to go on the films and Lord Blocks was just second best. But he was refused because his physique was all wrong. A boy I know says you can never be any good on the

drums unless you are Chinese, and that is why so many people nowadays eat in Chinese restaurants. This has made our manageress real wild and she has displayed a notice saying our chicken will be cheeper in future and all legs will be left. Anyway I was sitting brooding over a coke and scratching my name on the wall with my finger nail when this boy came up and asked to take me home. He was piculiar in that he had rope sandles and a little wooley cap on his head, but I was not detered for a moment knowing what strange creatures our menfolk are (I read that in a magazine once).

To get back to this boy. I saw his



"Anything to avoid tackling people face to face, that's you, isn't it?"

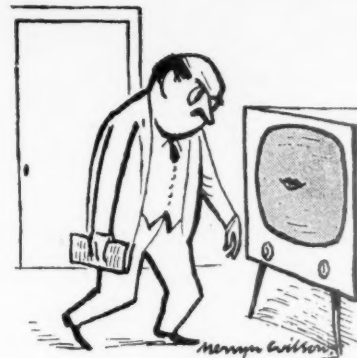
eyes rove past me and I was puzzled as I could only see a cheap looking girl in a tight black sweater. Then I caught the gleam of disgust in his eye. Funny thing but my sister was in the pictures once and a woman beside her took out her eye and wrapped it in a toffee paper when the sad bits were on, because it slipped when she cried. Honestly that is really true. I accepted the ride albeit a trifle shyly because as a rule I am wary of this kind of thing. That is ever since last Christmas when full of festive spirit I climbed in the butchers basket and crouched there shrieking like a fiend while five of us raced madly round the shopping centre on one wheel. But it was a laugh when people opened their windows and threw out their heads, and I saw one struggling into his civil defence uniform, and another started singing THE YANKS ARE COMING and thumping fervently the melody on the piano. So the old people gathered round and sang patriotic songs with tears in their eyes and forgot about us. And we went into the coffee bar down the road and drank coke and filled the juke box with filed down buttons.

I used to know a boy who had a submarine. Well not exactly but he went to see one once, only he got a motor bike instead. But it would have been nice to come home in one. I can just imagine it. I bet the neighbours would stare when we pushed up the



grating outside our house with that chimney thing on top. And you could go under the South pole too if you felt like it and had a holiday coming. This boy had a nice car. He said it was a BENTLY ROLLS, but I don't know much about things like that, though it did look a bit crooked in places. I got in and stretched out luxurantly upon the patient leopard. He started it and we swept off with a soft purr into the night. It was foggy as it happened and quite by chance I allowed myself to be driven past our house and into the open country. At last I gave a soft sigh of annoyance saying longsufferingly "Oh well it is only ten miles back if we keep to this road" and I took the precaution of putting on my fur lined duffle coat with detachable hood in crimson imitation chinchilla.

He turned to me and gave his crooked smile so my heart leapt beneath my orange sleeveless sweater with fairisle bands. His deft fingers collapsed the hood of the car and I felt the gentle country winds caressing my face and whipping an unaccustomed colour into my cheeks. So along we raced in much the same way as Cleopatra must have done years previous. Standing in her waggon akimbo and turning with defiant grin to shake her fist at the bands of screaming braves, while the smiling cupids broke loose from the tailboard and tumbled into the dust to be swept up instantly on the lances of the savages behind. She had little time to lament their loss though they were a birthday present from a friendly rancher. She could but concentrate on Toni the halfbreed who sat loading the gun held out by Hank his bearded pard and muttering strange oaths. I think that is right. Or was she the one who ran off with a carpet bagger?



He asked my name in a husky barrow-tone. I looked up mysterious with a faint smile, like I had often practised before the mirror, and said. "That I can never disclose because I am an enigma." He laughed. "Never mind my dearheart. I fear we have stopped." Which I knew already naturally because I had been looking at the same tree for ten minutes. Still I pretended he had been so interesting that I had not noticed, and giggled nervously. "But yes the engine has choked and died. What can we do?" He took a vacume flask from under the seat. "Here have a drink of this 1914 brandy. We are out of petrol and I must think out a plan of action."

I had one or two drinks and felt rather gay. I even wanted to start walking home until he pointed out that there would most likely be sinister characters lurking on every corner. I asked him where he got the brandy from and he said it was after he went to a dogs home to look for one he had lost and this St Bernard took a fancy to him. And when he patted it he made an amazing discovery. I bet you could never guess. Well round its neck was a little cask of brandy. He managed to sneak it out under his arm, but I believe it was a fluke. I think they must usually take them off young because I never saw a dog with a cask round its neck. Perhaps the keeper was saving it for something. Its like a camels hump really, only dogs are further up the elevator.

Suddenly I began to sing MEN OF HARLECH quite loudly. Which was a bit queer for I have only heard it once. After two or three times he leaned over and squeezed my knee exhaltantly and I felt a tingle run up my spine where I was pressed against the spare wheel. I covered back my

violet and silver plated charm bracelet cutting painfully into my wrist. So, inspiration struck me and I shock my head dazed. I knew what I must do. It was the only way. I stiffened my lip and tried to jump out of the window. But alas when I thought myself saved the cunning fool stuck out the indicator and I was dragged back by my own double hoop earring which I had put on by chance, I cursed my luck.

Oh, I cried dramatically like on the tele, clutching my forehead in my palm. "Oh I do verily believe I saw a chicken run under your car. And indeed," I put in sarcastically, "It is very like a henhouse except for having headlamps. How very nice to have plump chicken for Sunday dinner. For sure it must be a stray, a homeless yolkell, bedraggled and friendless." He was out of the car in a moment and down on his knees in the road. I had to giggle like anything he looked so funny. And of course there was nothing

there at all. But when he was right under I lept out and pelted down the road as hard as I could.

I hadnt gone far when I heard a roar like that of an enraged bull (not really but they always say that dont they?) and to my horror I saw a pair of approaching headlights. In a consternation I tried to climb the hedge, but it was eight feet tall and I am only 5ft. 4 in my stilletos. Without another thought I dashed across the road and dived into the ditch pulling the nettles around me. I hoped he would think I was a tree stump and actually I stuck one arm in the air like a branch with fingers outstretched, and made a whistling noise like leaves brushing together. It was very effective. And so they found me hours later. Dad and Uncle Fred who is in the fire brigade. Peering defiantly through the rustling grasses like some shy woodland bird. My crocodile evening bag clutched in my hand.

Long Live the American Musical

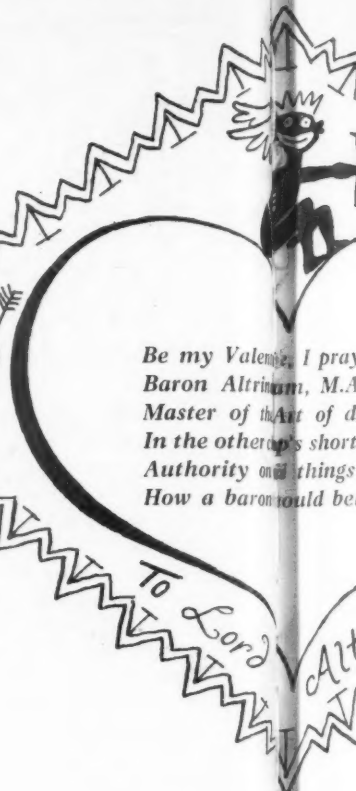
UP until quite a short while ago it used to give a certain amount of quiet satisfaction to my wife's uncle, Jim Brady,

To reflect that by the end of nineteen sixty nine he was going to be the only adult male in two continents never to have seen *My Fair Lady*.

But now his imagination's really taken wing, his ambition's fired, and he sees in the distance awaiting him yet greater glory:

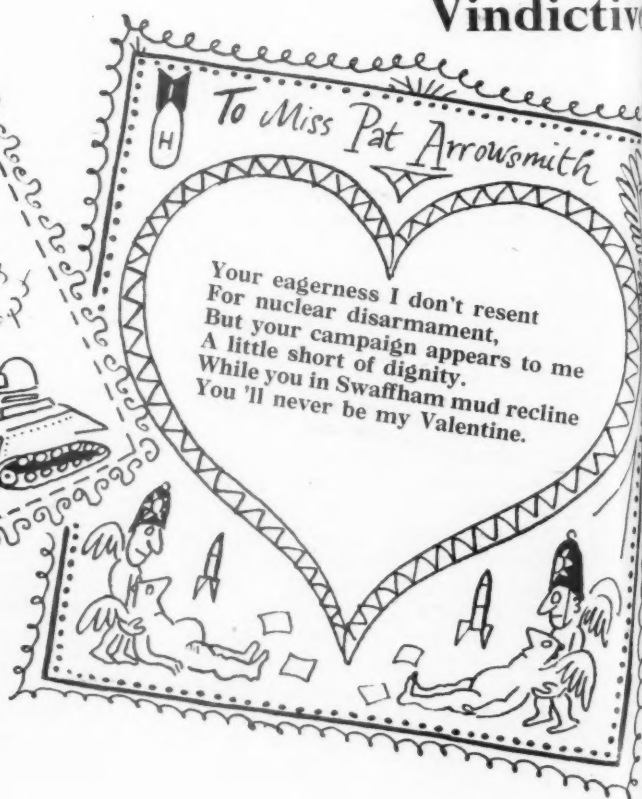
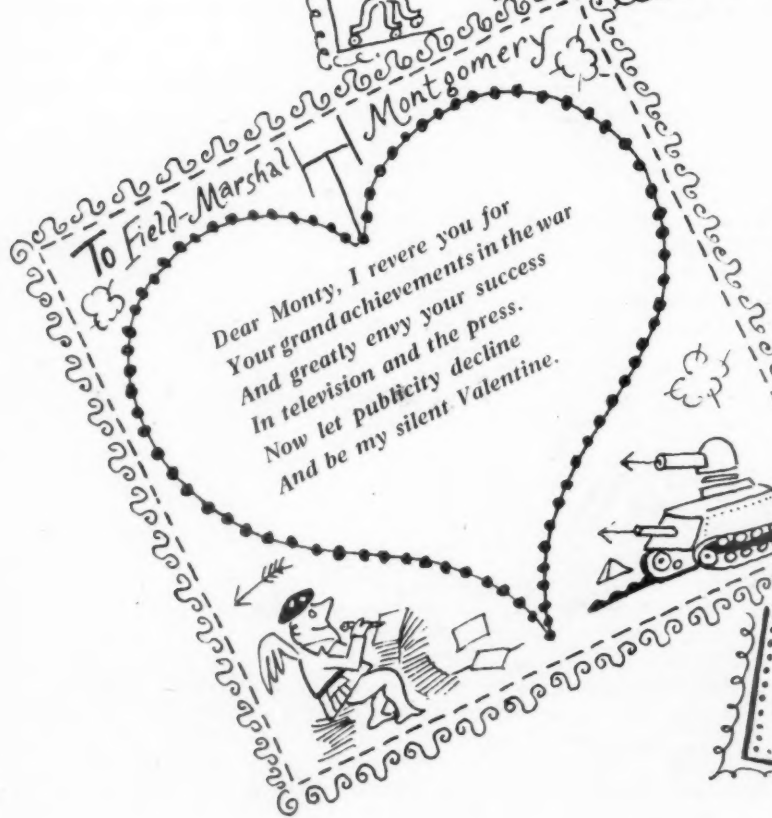
Somewhere around the middle of nineteen seventy-two, he reckons, he'll be the only one who also hasn't seen *West Side Story*.

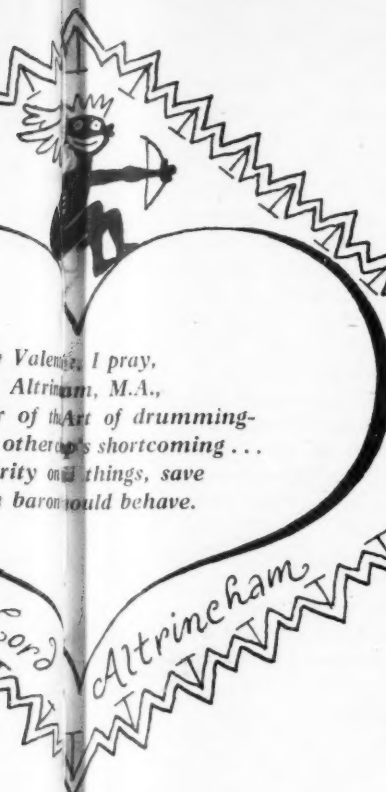
— KEITH STYLES



Be my Valentine, I pray
Baron Altrinum, M.A.
Master of the Art of d
In the other's short
Authority on all things
How a baron would be

Vindictive Va





Valentine, I pray,
Altrincham, M.A.,
of the Art of drumming—
other's shortcoming...
rity on things, save
baron would behave.

Altrincham

Active Valentines



Fidel, forgive my slight demur,
But please remember that to err
Is human, to forgive divine—
Then you can be my Valentine.

To Dr. Fidel Castro



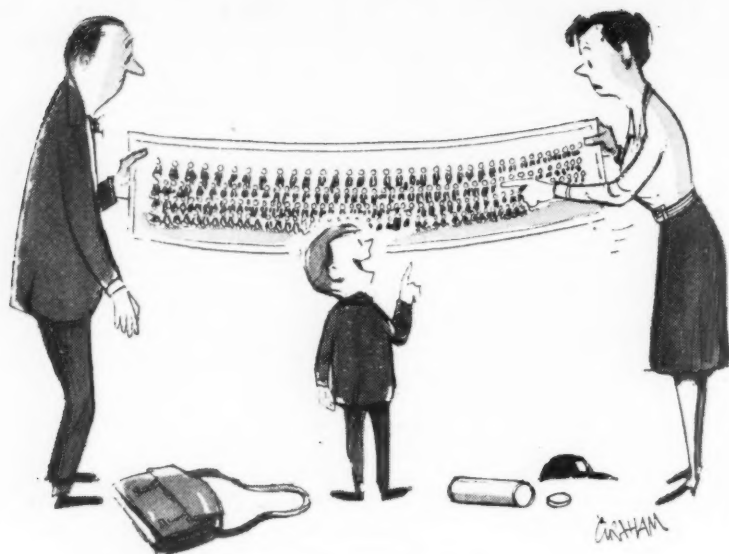
Long black stockings, gossip par.,
How I wonder whose you are!
(How, to variegate my song,
Does one know that they are long?)
Hickey seems to think you're fine,
Why not be his Valentine?

To Miss Suna Portman



In my arms I will enfold ya,
Marty, if you'll be a soldier!
Cats who find the barracks square
May get hip when you are there.
As a private of the line
I'll dig you for my Valentine.

To Mr. Marty Wilde



"You're getting warm."

Policy Moves, Latest

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

AN insurance company is recruiting sportsmen to its sales staff, on the theory that customers who can sound off about their pet sport in a comprehending ear will buy life insurance by the bushel. A thing like this can't stop here. What about recruiting a few novelists? Graham Greene, given a literary beat, could retire on his commissions after a year. Why not music and art? Edmundo Ros, Gerald Kelly—get your foot stuck in those doors. However, this is the scientific age, and selling annuities to physicists is notoriously a tough one: they tend to tuck their savings away in the nearest radiation-proof sock. When the insurance world cottons on to this the scientist-salesman will be having interviews like the following all up and down the reactor-country:

SALESMAN: How about £2,600 for you at age sixty-five?

PHYSICIST (*testing plastic powders to determine their flow properties*): Mind that bolometer.

SALES: Oh, sorry. I suppose you're using it to measure the intensity of radiations along the spectrum band.

PHYS.: What else?

SALES.: Funny things, thermodynamics.

PHYS.: You can say that again.

SALES.: Funny things, thermodynamics.

I mean, when you think that any given quantity of heat is equivalent to a specific amount of work.

PHYS: Yes? (*he collects several electrons on an anode*).

SALES.: No, I was just thinking that the older you get the more you feel the cold. Who's going to pay your coal bill when you're too old to test plastic powders?

PHYS. (straightening up): Look, young man, I don't know who you are—

SALES.: H. Barrington Scrimgeour.

PHYS.: —or where you come from—

SALES: Universal Allied and Mutual Friend Company, Limited. My card. (*Hands card.*)

PHYS. (handing it back): —but you happen to be leaning on a rather frail model of the magnet of a 7,000,000,000 electron volt proton synchrotron.

SALES.: Yes, I know. I was just thinking about the conversion from stored energy to field energy. How much would a thing like this need—thirty megajoules, something like that?

PHYS.: Thirty-five. The mercury

vapour switches are the problem. If the protons—(*breaks off*) Why don't you mind your own business?

SALES.: I am. I was in the atom game myself before I starved. Then Universal took me on. I've had to change my viewpoint radically, of course. At Harwell they taught us that accidents can't happen. That's no good in the insurance business. I've had to do some casualty research. You remember those three night-watchmen who had their clothes blown off by Groucho?

PHYS.: Groucho? That sounds like a reactor name, but I don't recall it.

SALES.: They kept it pretty quiet, especially after these fellows had been off fourteen weeks with nothing but the National Health.

PHYS.: I don't see where this is getting us.

SALES.: It could get you ten pounds a week while you were recovering from digging your hand in some alpha particles.

PHYS.: Pooh! Alpha particles.

SALES.: Perhaps you don't know that they create a straight dense track in a Wilson cloud chamber? (*Phys. drops a two-electrode thermionic valve.*) Ask Lord Rutherford, if he's around.

PHYS.: Why didn't the watchmen get compensation?

SALES.: How do you think the insurance companies are going to keep solvent?

PHYS.: Anyway, it can't happen to me.

SALES.: That's what they all say. By the way, is that ultracentrifuge part of your equipment?

PHYS.: Why?

SALES.: Don't get your finger caught in it. A friend of mine called Ricklock, quite an authority on uranium curanyl fluoride—

PHYS.: I wish you'd shut up.

SALES.: I take it you're a family man?

PHYS. (to himself): Let's see, one calorie represents . . .

SALES.: . . . $4 \cdot 184$ multiplied by 10^7 ergs.

PHYS.: Thanks.

SALES.: I only ask, because my friend left a wife and four lovely kiddies. I mean, you *needn't* wait until age sixty-five for the £2,600. You can always forget to sew a button on your protective clothing, and the family draws at once. Sometimes even before probate's granted.

PHYS. (throwing several switches with an

air of finality and pushing back his eyeshade): Tell me something.
 SALES.: Sure. You can pay the premiums out of income, and the whole of the—
 PHYS.: Tell me, if you're a scientist, why are you selling insurance?
 SALES.: Company policy, boy. I only sell to the scientists. Common interest, see?
 PHYS.: Not with me.
 SALES.: No?
 PHYS.: I'm not really interested. Sport, that's my subject. Is it yours?
 SALES. (brazening it out): Oh, yes. Very.
 PHYS.: Fine. Then what's your view—would you say that Rorke had the makings of a second Lindwall or not?
 SALES.: You've got me there. Actually, I'm interested in any sport but Rugby football.
 PHYS.: Get out! (He snatches up a dangerous-looking graphite-rod and raises it menacingly. SCIENTIST-SALESMAN runs out screaming.)

Science Specialist

I SPENT two years in the Science Sixth doing A-level G.C.E. And three more reading Physics and Maths. for my B.Sc. degree, But by then I was tired of the world of Things with all its pumps and sanities And I thought for a change I would bask a while in the warmth of the Humanities. So I made myself known to an angry young man who spoke after lunch at the Rotary Who got me into the inner set of a long-haired duffel-coterie.

It was only then that I understood what being in a groove meant, For the poets I met were immobilized in something called "The Movement," And they promptly complained of feeling sick when I ventured to quote a canto Of the O-level stuff I had done at school, like *Drake's Drum* and *Lepanto*. When I mentioned my favourite authors, too, they gave a derisive hoot, Though my list began with Ray Bradbury and included Nevil Shute.

Now, I like a good book and I like a good play but I flatly refuse to grovel Before pundits who pontificate on The Drama and The Novel, So I'm back at my bench and my solenoids where at least I shan't be attacked By a critic more carping than Nature, or one more unfeeling than Fact; For we men of Science are sensitive souls and averse to causing pain, But the experts in the Humanities are damn well inhumane.

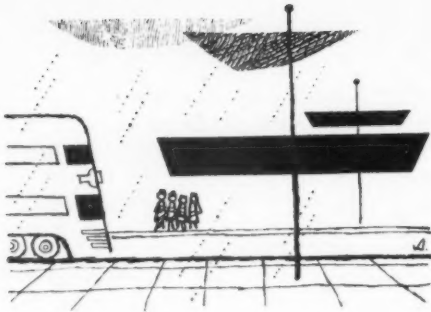
— E. V. MILNER

Man in Apron

by

LAITY





Continuing a Novelette of the Future by

We're Strangers Here Ourselves—3

CLAUD COCKBURN

Cut off from the modern world for seventy years, the Eastcliffs and Waynes are discovering the England of 2032

"AND I say," said Henry Eastcliffe furiously, "that this bloody thing is nothing more nor less than a tram, T-R-A-M, a form of transport that was considered out-dated, my dear Jane, as long ago as 1959 when great-grandpa took off for the Andes. Seventy-three years ago, to be exact. And now look!"

He spoke with venom, because of the feeling he had started to have in the room at the Mountbatten Hotel, Badminton, that his beloved was positively making eyes at the modern world and was getting ready to be seduced or ravished by it before his very eyes. Not for the first time he wished that, after all, he and his sister and the two Waynes had stayed on in the Andes and left "the world of to-day" alone.

The heliflight from Badminton to Hitchin had been accomplished at 500 m.p.h. From the heliterminal a series of escalators and moving platforms had taken them into and along a couple of miles of tunnel, and brought them out at a station of the surface transport system. The trans-suburban express was already at the station. It consisted of a car running on electric rails, double-decked, and long enough to accommodate twenty transverse rows of seats on each deck. Being an express it attained a high speed between stations and stopped only at the major stations, which were sometimes three, sometimes four miles apart.

It rolled and pitched like a ship in a moderately high sea. For a ten-shilling bit anti-nausea pills could be obtained from containers affixed to the backs of the seats. Similar cars could be seen

crawling, on the non-express rails, across the crowded face of Hertfordshire in the sluicing rain at an average speed of seven or eight miles an hour.

The conductor, over-hearing Henry aspersing the vehicle, took offence. "Just for your personal information," he said, "this just happens to be the most techno-right system of its kind anywhere in Europe. Highest accommodation to speed-ratio compatible with conditions. You couldn't allow any but special flights across this area any more than you could allow any but special road travel—too much congestion and danger. Think of the traffic control system you'd need. This isn't flaming China, you know," he added mysteriously.

Henry, thinking to put a bromide on what seemed to be the man's ulcer, said loudly "Well the weather hasn't changed, anyway."

But at this the conductor turned upon him with eyes that seemed actually to bulge with disgust.

"And what," he demanded, "is that little remark intended to convey?"

"My brother just meant," said Ann, "we were brought up—we have lived all our lives in the Andes, you know—to understand that in England it usually rained a good deal. I expect it'll clear up soon," she added brightly, by way of mollifying the conductor.

"Oh, very damn funny," said the conductor. "If you expect it's going to clear up soon you'd better just go on

expecting for another thirty days or so. That's how long this funny little passing shower's likely to go on."

The climate damn well *had* changed, he added. And what caused it? The ruddy Russians caused it and the flaming Chinese. First they dammed the Yenisei and the other big Siberian rivers, creating an inland sea in Siberia, and that began to alter the weather a bit. Then they started monkeying about with the Behring Strait.

"They put atomic power on the job, and before you could spit they'd got billions and billions and damn billions of gallons of this warmish Pacific Ocean water vomiting over into the Arctic Ocean. With what result? Siberia and the Gobi desert blooming like the rose. Alaska, Norway blooming like the rose. John o' Groats, and points south as far as Inverness, the sunlover's home from home. And down here rain. Billions and billions and damn billions of slopping great gallons of damn rain."

"So that," cried Jane excitedly, "is what happened at Andes View. And we thought being flooded out of our valley was just bad luck. Isn't that interesting?"

The conductor left them, and Henry took the opportunity to throw more cold water on what he conceived to be Jane's ill-conceived passion for the Present.

"Trams lumbering through a sub-tropical rainstorm. That's where Progress has got to," he remarked viciously.

"There'll be more to it than that," said Jane with eager confidence. Henry regarded her askance.

"And another thing," he said, addressing the three of them as though they were a section of troops whom he was briefing before battle. "We don't know what may have happened about sex.



I think we ought all of us to keep an eye out for that."

"What *could* have happened?" Ann asked reasonably.

"Anything," said Henry. "As I understand it that was what great-grandpa felt in 1959. That was quite definitely one of the things that was running right off the rails. Quite apart from the world blowing itself up or the Reds taking over, he definitely saw the way things were going on the sexual front as indicative that disaster wasn't far off."

"But the world didn't blow up," said Ann.

"I just think you want to keep these so-called modern people at arm's length. They may not see things just the way we're accustomed to see them."

"That'll make a nice change," said Jane. He glared at her. She glared back at him. She continued glowering and silent while they left the surface express at the station named "Link Hall (General Co-ordination Board)" and boarded a small electric wagon which plied between the station and the Board headquarters in the old Rothschild mansion in Tring park.

"Watch out for Jane," Bernard murmured to Henry, "she's in a mood where she's capable of anything."

And sure enough they had hardly been seated five minutes in Sir-Sir Browning's private office—"what I call my inner-awareness room," he told them—and were exchanging a few commonplaces about their trip, and how different Hertfordshire was from the Andes, and what would they have to drink, all of which made Henry feel things were rather less ghastly than he had feared, when Jane said "Just

cutting across the banalities and chit-chat, Lord Sir-Sir James, I wonder if you could settle a point that's worrying Mr. Eastcliffe horribly."

"Jane!" cried Henry.

"Very glad to," said Sir-Sir Browning. "The motto of my Board, the motto I've always acted on in my capacity as a co-ordinator, is that a point discussed is a point half settled. I couldn't begin to tell you how many points we have half settled in just that way. Now is this a major point or a minor one? That's one of the things we co-ordinators have learned to distinguish. It's been part of our Contribution over the years."

"He's mad keen," said Jane, "to know what you people do about sex. His great-grandfather thought that by now it would all be done with test-tubes."

Henry's yelp of protest and disavowal was overwhelmed by a rich voice-fanfare from Sir-Sir Browning. He rose. His splendid eyes were diamond-bright with appreciation. His noble lips parted in an all-wise smile. His satin-smooth skin, freshly-grafted after the ravaging row with the Plankton Board only six months ago, shone in the artificial sunlight.

Then the decibels came ringing, compelling, and clear.

"Now that," he said, "is just the kind of question I want. Had you not asked it I would have had to ask you to do so. It's what the public expects from people come out of the back of beyond. With that they can self-identify and heighten contemporaneity-awareness."

He bowed slightly. "Mr. Eastcliffe, you have significance. Miss Wayne, you have what the doctor ordered. This is going to make a fool of that

fool Earl Thompson at the B.B.C. Subliminal 2 indeed, for this kind of significance, and him claiming extra-co-ordination autonomy for his wretched outfit! Just sign this form will you?"

To each of the four he handed a form, four of which he seemed to have in readiness on his desk.

"What exactly is . . .?" Bernard mumbled.

"All this does," said Sir-Sir Browning, "is to pledge your Welfare Contribution—and in my view its going to be a very valuable one indeed—to General Co-ordination, first, last, and all the time."

"You mean it sews us up to work for your lot?" asked Ann.

Sir-Sir smiled, ever so understandingly. "No, no," he said. "This is just a declaration of intention to co-operate."

"Oh, is that all?"

"Penalties for other-whither contribution by pledged departmental co-operators are inevitably severe, naturally, of course. But that won't arise. I'm sure it won't. My motto is Absolute Trust."

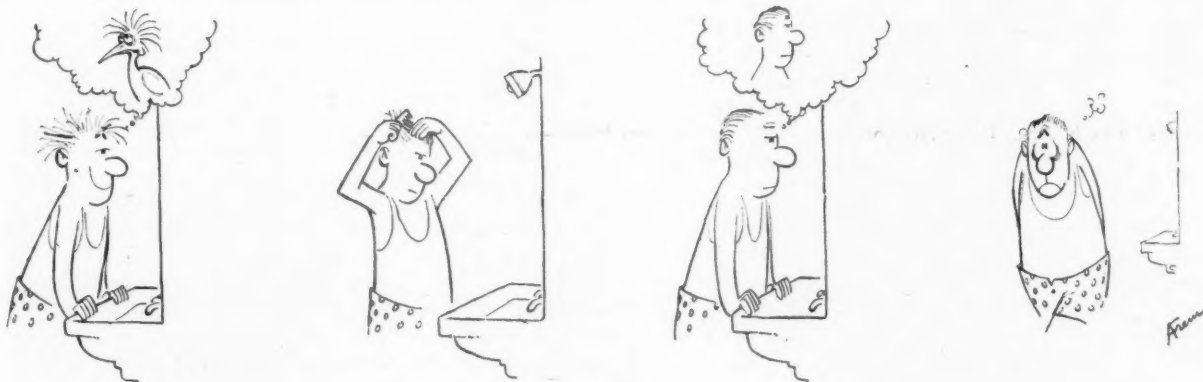
"You mean we should scratch out the bit about penalties?" said Bernard, goggling at his form.

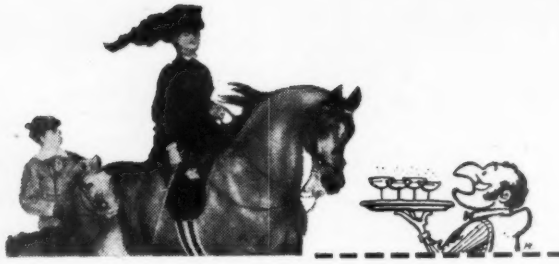
"Better not," said Sir-Sir, "that would be both needless and suggestive of negativism. Trust, to be absolute, must be reciprocal. And now," he added, "I would like you to meet the Dame."

"Dame?"

"My constant Contributor and ex-wife," said Sir-Sir Browning.

(What contribution will the four visitors from the Andes make? You cannot afford to miss next week's dynamic instalment.)



FOR
WOMEN

Alive, but not Madly Kicking

IT was nine o'clock on a cold and February morning, and at the bottom of Berkeley Street the sun was struggling to get up. The doors of the Empress Club had, some time earlier, sleepily yawned open; and inside, in the restaurant, a long-playing pianist was working away at *My Fair Lady* as though he had played all night . . . indeed he must have been playing all night, for surely no pianist would come out to play, from wherever pianists live, so early in the morning.

Passing from the steel-grey light outside into the restaurant lit with shaded, intimate lights, representatives of the fashion press were groping their way to tables laid for breakfast. They had been welcomed by their host, the Managing Director of Aristoc; and already at one table, recognizable but unbelievable, were Lady Pamela Berry and Mr. Victor Stiebel, President and Chairman respectively of the Incorporated Society of London Fashion Designers. A raised runway laid across the ballroom floor led towards this table; and down this flare-path, after kedgeriee had been eaten and toast and marmalade were on the tables, there prowled long-limbed girls in Aristoc stockings, dressed in tiny white togas, their faces anonymous behind feathered carnival masks. They prowled to the music of the indefatigable pianist, and to the beautiful golden-syrup voice of London's most sought-after fashion commère. She spoke in moving tones of deniers and gauges, of Vivette point-heels, and of such subtle new hosiery shades as Moselle, Magnolia, Twilight, Tahiti. Morning rapture, one would say, could go no further. But, yes, it could! A bouquet of red tulips was

presented to Lady Pamela—surely the first time a bouquet has ever been presented at nine o'clock in the morning. Usually, in this unjust world of ours, the early riser only gets the traditional worm.

Taxis were waiting outside to take the guests to the House of Worth, where the first *couture* collection of the morning was about to be shown. On the drive to Grosvenor Street, reflecting, it seemed that the mind which conceived that breakfast presentation for such simple hum-drum necessities as stockings must have a touch of genius—or madness. Either way, it is the requisite touch for the fashion world, which can only be kept alive and effectively kicking by injections of genius, madness, and kedgeriee. Champagne is not enough.

But, alas! that early morning idyll was the only hypodermic of the week; and from the findings of the Spring Collections of Paris and London, fashion appears to be entering a new phase which could be the beginning of a sad decline. She has lost her attack. The only positive finding of Paris was a negative one: the Empire line is finished. Otherwise, fashion has settled for compromise: waists where you like within reason, the skirt length whatever suits you. The collections were pretty, feminine—and wearable, that most damning of all faint praises.

Wearability can, of course, be presented as good news; but it means that we are in for a period of clothes, not fashion. Fashion must have that hint of the capricious, that aura of the irrational, without which even the well-dressed woman is never truly elegant. Something would go out of social life and the fun of living if clothes were

designed and bought to be worn from season unto season. The pursuit of fashion is, for many harmless women leading boring, blameless lives, their only redeeming vice. Take it away and what have they left? Not, as they say, "what it takes."

Yet can fashion be taken away altogether? Suppress her how and as you will, she will always, somewhere, rear her lovely head. Although these collections have been only remarkable in their unremarkableness, it may be but a temporary reaction. In the past few years fashion has tricked herself out in too many changes too swiftly: the sack, the chemise, the trapeze, the baby doll, the sheath, the Directoire . . . it has been one thing after another in breathless succession. She has not been able to keep pace with herself or consolidate her bases. This season's reversion to the normal, natural figure, this indeterminate casual line is at its best, and in the beautiful fabrics we have seen, disarming in its chic simplicity. It may not be so much a reaction as a rest—the pause before another spring.

— ALISON ADBURGHAM

☆

First-Class Materialists

IN Lancashire we know a fabric when we feel one. At least one of our menfolk has trained us to check those little labels saying "silk," "pure linen" and the like. We can spot a cotton/rayon mixture, passed as cotton, while it still swirls round the dummy's slender hips, and nobody can pull the wool over *our* enlightened eyes.

This makes us choosy, but not so choosy that our husbands let us loose on fashion floors alone. With counting-glasses in their pockets they accompany us into the fitting-rooms even of Houses with the highest reputations, and while assistants go in search of other styles and shades, they crumple in their expert fingers garments we have tried, peer closely under collars, run their thumbnails on the undersides of hems and solemnly shake their heads. They have even been known to pluck away a thread and set it alight in their pipes, watching and sniffing with intense suspicion while it burns. (Will it leave a white

bead (nylon), black blob (cellulose acetate), or maybe nothing (viscose?) Or, having plucked, they stretch and moisten poor, defenceless strands to see which way they spiral. (Clockwise linen, anti-clockwise hemp.)

As for those magic phrases, "pre-shrunk," "fast to light, heat, water," "shower-proof," "drip-dry" and the rest, it is a tribute to our female strength of character that our husbands are not discovered in some hide between two racks of gowns, with burning-glasses, soap-flakes, bowls and watering-cans.

If we resent this male intrusion on the freedom of our choice we do not say so, for the matter has been thrashed out long ago and settled on the lines of "he who pays the piper can at least make sure he plays in tune."

The saddest thing is that our husbands look no further than the threads. They have particular affection for the "solid" materials which rarely make up into the frivolous delights that we are seeking. "Sack" to them means "hessian" and the Empire line raises suspicions of non-Lancashire goods.

Thus we have learned to need extensive wardrobes, half filled with unquestionable quality and half with impeccable style. Now and again, of course, we manage both in one fell swirl, but the ensuing cheque takes quite a lot of signing. For there we have another problem. Knowing all about the cost of raw materials and production of the cloth our husbands cannot understand why all our outfits should be so expensive. We merely smile and say it is a tribute to their own outstanding reputation.

Yes, we are quite the most restrained and tactful wives. And, of course, the best-dressed women in the country.

— HAZEL TOWNSON

"I jumped into the first railway compartment which seemed empty; my eyes fell on a book left on the seat opposite by a previous passenger.

I took it up absent-mindedly and ran through the first lines. Five minutes later I was reading it as eagerly as a clue to a hidden treasure. I learned that everyone's memory is capable of fantastic feats . . ."

Advertisement in Argosy

Such as leaving books in trains?

After the Deluge

"MY three sub-teenagers went back to their boarding-schools days ago," writes Mrs. J. H., "and now I think I am strong enough to turn their rooms out. Please give me some hints on how not to throw the wrong things away, etc."

You are on to the nub of the problem, Mrs. J. H., and are probably already picking up the ninety-seven *Used British Threepenny Stamps* your children "floated" so keenly off *Corners of Old Envelopes*. Don't keep the corners too, you dimwit, the *Papier Mâché Work* is all in one lump and when dried out can be placed decoratively on a dressing-table along with the *Eighty Yards of Chain-Crocheted Wool* that keeps getting round your legs. Is the other end tied to a *Giant Teddy Bear* you have been actually ordered to chuck away? Then leave him there. What you are kneeling on is his precious *Squeak*, which of course goes in the box inscribed "Squeaks, Keep Out by Order."

Written-on Paper is a headache for the conscientious mother, Mrs. J. H., and by the time you've collected *Five Dozen Slips Printed Yah Boo Sucks* you may be thinking that only *Obvious*

Literary Work (e.g. the amazing story entitled "An Amazing Story") really needs preserving. Pack your *Collected Gems* into the *Baked Bean Carton* joined by *Meccano Strips to Hem of Curtain*—and look along inside the curtain-hem for *Penny Blacks*, *Wrappers off Catfood Tins* and *Your Best Nail-scissors*, won't you?

Use a dust-pan and stiff brush for getting up the *Gramophone Records* and cover any window-seats in dainty glazed chintz.

— ANGELA MILNE

☆

Chance Encounter

I NEVER seize my oldest coat
To catch the post, and fast,
But Mrs. A, that Fashion Note,
Goes tripping neatly past.

Sometimes I think it isn't fair—
Her dressed her usual way,
Me wearing what I only wear
For meeting Mrs. A.

— CAROL PAINE



"One has to move with the times."

Toby Competitions

No. 55—"Oh! I Am a," etc.

"NO songs like the old songs," the old folk keep telling us. Write an occupational ballad (one verse and chorus should be plenty) with the feeling of something like "The Cobbler's Song," "Stonecracker John," "Simon the Cellarer" or "The Lincolnshire Poacher's Song," but in a modern setting.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive a book token to the value of one guinea. Entries by first post on Friday, February 20, to TOBY COMPETITION No. 55, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 52

(Muffled Report)

Headmasters' reports which softened the blow were required. Some were too prolix and ranged all round the curriculum instead of summing up the character. Others concentrated on the pupil's extra-mural activities, usually criminal. Catastrophes in the laboratory, violence and mere mental inertia were sketched rather too blatantly; there were over-loud echoes of a St. Trinian's for boys. The prizewinner, who achieved the most satisfactory combination of suavity and sincerity, was:

CHESTNUT GROVE

Charles Pears, R.O.I., now widely known as a marine artist, contributed this drawing nearly fifty years ago.



Booky (from whom Old Gent has just received five sovereigns at four to one). "NOW THEN, SANTA CLAUS, WHAT ARE YOU BITING EM FOR? DO YOU THINK I'D GIVE YOU WRONG 'UNS?"

Old Gent. "NOA, LADDY, IT'S NO THAT; I'M JUST MAKING SURE THAT I HAV'NA GOT THAT ONE BACK WHICH I PASSED OFF ON THEE!"

June 15 1910

J. H. POLFREY

FIRCROFT,

BROADWATER RISE,

GUILDFORD

for this entry:

Holds to his own theories concerning history, geography and mathematics with phenomenal tenacity. Is self-effacing in class and does not resent being passed over. Takes time for earnest thought before deciding that a problem is insoluble. Evinces a sturdy xenophobia when engaged with Latin or French, but, as will doubtless be apparent from his letters home, expresses himself in English with staccato brevity. The cares of the teaching staff do not dampen his habitual cheerfulness. A sound full-back.

Extracts from runners-up follow:

Has done a fair week's work this term but is so modest that he successfully conceals his scholastic ability from his masters. That he is able to do just sufficient work to escape punishment shows an understanding of the school system far beyond his years. His keenness for games, in the classroom and dormitory, merits remark.—*G. F. Gaydon, Betley, 47 Goring Road, West Worthing*

A boy of character. Inclined at times, not always selected with care, to follow a little too eagerly the more adventurous activities of his elders. His popularity with his colleagues is not always, *ipso facto*, shared by mine, but this is perhaps explained by conflicting standards. With plenty of room for development, he is one whom the School will eventually be pleased to acknowledge as a finished product.—*S. E. Bracken, 15 Horrocks Road, Newton Lane, Chester*

Over and above his obvious talents for escape, evasion and destruction, he has, I feel, many sterling qualities. He is learning to mix with his fellows but must understand that the process will continue to be painful so long as he persists in entering via doors marked "exit."—*Wing-Commander W. O. Davies, 14 Bangor Walk, H.Q. 2 T.A.F., B.F.P.O. 40.*

With his undoubted power of self-expression and great physical energy I often feel that he should be in a class by himself.—*F. A. V. Madden, Russell School, Ballards, Addington, Surrey*

Cora tends to discount the usages of a time-worn curriculum, but her natural gifts will be brought into prominence by our new co-educational system.—*Mrs. F. Irene Linfoot, 21 Rosparvah Gardens, Hea Moor, Penzance*

Hitherto unpublished report received by the father of Machiavelli during his sojourn at an English public school:

"I wryte to furnish you with an indication of ye progresse made by your sonne in his studies since that he had been in my care. As to the learning of Holie Writ, he knoweth to cite scripture to his purpose. As yet he hath not mastered entirely our cumbersome Northern tonge, but in his native speche he can express himself with a fine ironie. As to the mathematicks he findeth them flashy things save where he can learn to gain some profit thereby. In history he hath an astonishing ability to find the motives and secret policies of princes. He hath ever an eye to his best interest. He hath not been seen to do anything amiss.—*Adrienne Gascoigne, 17 Blossom Street, York*

In England's Bright and Pleasant Land

Lines written outside a country churchyard

AS the old church clock strikes midnight,

Another day is done

And the lights of concrete standards

Go out now one by one.

The glare that came from the by-pass

Reverts to velvet blue

And stars that are almost strangers

Come slipping slowly through.

The moon is suddenly silvered

Now that the neon's gone

And the corpse that strode on the footpath

As flesh and blood strides on.

That hooting is owls not motors;

I thank God for the night—

If only that is a shooting star

And not a satellite.

— FLORENCE PROCTOR

Essence of



Parliament

MOST of the fun and games this week has been at question-time. Mr. Hector Hughes started it all off on Monday by complaining about dinoflagellates, which were some funny little things that were swimming about in the sea, and if there were too many of them they might influence the general election. Why they should influence the general election Mr. Godber could not understand—nor indeed was he the only one. It was of course all a joke, but Mr. Hughes brings from Aberdeen a sense of humour sometimes a little too recondite for us poor Southerners. Mr. Rankin's questions on Tuesday about what would happen if other animals got themselves caught in the traps that were "For Foxes Only" were more nearly at our level. Then there was Mr. Ellis Smith demanding that the House of Commons should be televised. Both Mr. Herbert Morrison and the Prime Minister were a little doubtful. We had understood that the Prime Minister had given up jokes for the election period. However, this temptation was too much for him, but his jokes were of a rather heavy—not to say elephantine—variety. The most welcome news of the week came from Mr. Harmar Nichols, who told us that the world was going slower—had indeed been rotating more slowly on its axis for some time, though none of us had noticed it. Like the man in *Voces Populi* who asked of Gambetta "Better nor who?" I should have liked to have asked of the earth's rotation "Slower than what?" By what does one measure its slowness? But no Member thought of that one. Meanwhile their lordships had been complaining about railway carriages, and Lord Silkin had voiced the awful demand that telephones should be laid on so that travellers could ring up people from the train. Is there

no end to horror? Oh, Progress, what crimes are to be committed in thy name! Then at question time—and indeed at adjournment time—there have throughout the week been a good many somewhat inconclusive cracks about steel polls; and finally it was Thursday's question time which brought forth the long-expected announcement of the Premier's visit to Moscow.

The Prime Minister likes doing spectacular things and likes saying that he is going to do spectacular things, and he obviously enjoyed the occasion. If there were any doubting Thomases they thought it prudent to keep their doubts to themselves, and there was no discordant voice. Mr. Grimond wished that Mr. Gaitskell might be with the Prime Minister and Mrs. Mann wished that God might be with him. Other Members reserved their choice.

The only interesting debate was that on Malta on Monday. It was interesting because it was at least different from other debates. The complaint is often made of the set debates that they are uninteresting because their result is a foregone conclusion. They are con-

trasted to their disadvantage with the rare debates when the Whips are off and when speeches may sway votes. Now, as far as Westminster went, the Malta debate was as foregone a debate as one could imagine. There was no rumour of Tory revolt, no reason at all to imagine that the Government would not get its normal majority at the close—and indeed it got it all right. But the speeches were addressed not to the House of Commons nor to the people of Britain, who were not greatly interested, but to the people of Malta. Mr. Mintoff

had announced that the vote of the House of Commons would be followed the next day by a "day of mourning" and protest. Up till then there had been no certain demonstration of how far the people of Malta supported Mr. Mintoff in his demand for independence. If the spokesmen at Westminster could appear reasonable, they might shake Mr. Mintoff's hold in Malta.

If that was their purpose, then Tuesday's news from Malta seems to show that they have not succeeded in it. Yet that does not say that they did not do their best—at any rate in so far as this debate went. And there was throughout a wise and welcome restraint.

No speaker quoted some of the more extravagant things that Mr. Mintoff had said in order to arouse passion. The request of Mr. Bevan and Mr. Griffiths that the bill be withdrawn and responsible government be reintroduced was not in itself wholly realistic, because of course none of the political leaders in Malta is willing to work the present constitution. Therefore there is little alternative to the prolongation of the Governor's special powers—at any rate for the moment. Yet it was perhaps no bad thing that Mr. Bevan and Mr. Griffiths should have spoken as they did. It at least showed evidence of good will. In the same way it was not quite clear what Mr. Crossman and Mr. Julian Amery, from their opposite sides, meant by saying that they still believed in integration. It is not clear how there can be integration, however intrinsically desirable, so long as the Maltese will not work it. But again it was perhaps as well that they said it. So long as the British Government can only offer the Maltese a constitution less liberal than that which has been suspended it is difficult to see how any Maltese politician will dare to accept it.

— PERCY SOMERSET



Mr. Lennox-Boyd



Mr. John Rankin



So Far, So Good

THE first fruits of sterling's convertibility are lush and tasty. The gold reserve in January rose by £15m., despite the fact that £30m. in gold had to be paid out to the dear departed European Payments Union. E.P.U. is dead, long live E.M.A.! These new initials with which we shall have to become acquainted stand for European Monetary Agreement, a means of settling payments within a Europe of convertible currencies. Under E.P.U. we settled 75 per cent in gold or dollars and 25 per cent "on tick." Now there is no automatic credit. Cash on the counter is the order of the day, and credit will only be provided for the members of E.M.A. who can prove justification.

The initial ordeal of trial by convertibility has been passed by sterling with flying colours. The Jeremiahs who predicted that as soon as foreigners were told formally that they could convert their sterling into dollars, or anything else, in the official market they would rush to do so have proved, fortunately and utterly, wrong. It was in any case extraordinarily naïve to suggest that the gentlemen of Zurich and Amsterdam were in any uncertainty about their ability to convert sterling even before convertibility was officially decreed. They are not a bunch of "*bourgeois gentilhommes*" who were astounded to learn on December 29, 1958, that they had been talking prose all their speaking lives.

What has happened is the very reverse of what the pessimists feared. Convertible sterling has attracted the confidence of the rest of the world. The foreigner, for the first time since before the war, has been investing in sterling securities in a big way. Quite apart from special deals such as Reynolds Metals' massive purchases of British Aluminium shares and the Massey-Ferguson bid for the Perkins diesel engine business, there has been a steady stream of buying of sterling securities from the United States and the continent of Europe. Here is a compliment to sterling and also an act

of faith in the political future of Britain. May they both be justified.

It would, however, be an insult to sterling to suggest that this reinforcement of the reserve during the first month of sterling's convertibility was wholly due to the inflow of foreign money. There has also been a continuous commercial demand for sterling. This is the time of year when sales of sterling area commodities are in full seasonal flood. In addition Britain itself has been maintaining its exports at a satisfactory level. It is the all-round strength of sterling that is the most impressive feature of the latest reserve statement. The verdict on the move into convertibility must be "So far, so good."

Hard on the heels of this good news



By the Sea

GRANDFATHER would have been all set with a most judicious moral. I . . . well, I was only an observer.

There was in this small rock-pool a limpet, a little conical fortress clinging to the rock with all the strength of its single, sucking foot.

Also in the pool there was a crab, a small, green crab. In and out the wispy weed it sidled industriously on its ceaseless search for food, its unsuccessful search it seemed. It approached with wistful nippers the citadel of the limpet. Within that calcareous cone was store of food, rich store. (Limpets should be parboiled, dusted with oatmeal and fried—delicious though chew-some.)

But so soon as the little crab approached, the limpet withdrew its multiple searching cilia, which sieved the tiny currents of the pool, and drew its shell down tight on to the rock surface, that being the way of limpets when little crabs are near. Impregnable, it could withstand all assault from the puny nippers.

I dallied with the kindly thought of detaching the limpet from its hold so

came the announcement of yet another "dash for freedom." This is the decision to put the Capital Issues Committee virtually out of business. Time and again the able and somewhat venerable gentlemen who have given their time and labours to this committee have passed judgments which have been difficult to understand. Henceforth this committee will be kept in suspended animation, though it will still have to pass its judgment on issues by borrowers outside this country. The British economy is at the moment suffering from an inadequacy not of savings but of investment. The obvious move in the circumstances is to take down the C.I.C. hurdles that have in the past been stopping some capital investment at home.

— LOMBARD LANE

* * *

that the crab might eat (kindly, of course, only to the crab). However, the crab relieved me of the need for decision.

For, rather pathetically as I thought, it folded its little legs beneath it, close by the limpet shell. It seemed to me that it planned to wait until the shell lifted and make a sudden sally. I would have screamed a warning, for it was plain that if it put a nipper between shell and rock the shell would close down and the fragile nipper would be . . . nipped. But this was a thoughtful crab and had seen the danger. Up slowly rose the limpet shell. Cilia began to weave their endless pattern. Cautiously a nipper edged forward. But not empty. It held a small piece of gravel from the bottom. And quite carefully, deliberately, it set the speck of gravel between shell and rock.

Down came the shell, so soon as the limpet sensed the alien body. But not quite down. For the speck of gravel now held the shell a little aloof from the rock. There was space for a small nipper to enter. "The virtues of patience . . . Where there's a will there's a way . . . Bruce and the spider . . ." I could almost hear grandfather's voice in my ear.

Then out from the weed where it had been skulking, awakened by the delicate odour of veritable food, came sidling a big, black bully of a crab.

My clever little green friend was driven off, battered, bemused and short of a nipper, to starve elsewhere.

Moralize me that, my grandfather.

— WILFRED MCNEILLY



BOOKING OFFICE

The Psychologist of Sex

An Artist of Life. John Stewart Collis.

Cassell, 25/-

Havelock Ellis. Arthur Calder-Marshall.

Hart-Davis, 30/-

HOW difficult it is for the layman to judge the anthropologist or Homeric scholar or writer on religion or economics whose early contacts are with cranks rather than with dons—the non-established student. It is a type that has died out since the days of Shaw's Prefaces, which are full of glimpses of odd figures who to Shaw were seminal. Some cranks start from unusual positions but end in the main stream, perhaps by diverting it towards themselves; half the world now follows a creed that began in an atmosphere of shabby cuffs in libraries and sleazy bed-sitting rooms and cheap cafés. Other cranks diverge increasingly from reality and live in worlds that contract from the progressive Society to the group of disciples and eventually to four dirty walls enclosing a lonely desk.

Havelock Ellis's assured self-education, heavy beard, sage-like behaviour and tendency to mix more with cranks than with scientists or poets or scholars make the mid-twentieth-century reader wary. Some of the praise he gained was for willingness to transcend the narrow categories of specialization, a willingness for which in our own time Mr. Colin Wilson has been both praised and flayed. Mr. Collis in his loyal and grateful tribute speaks of him as a higher peak in the same range as Spengler, Keyserling and Madariaga, the generalizers. He shows the kind of magic Ellis's radiant intellect had for a younger man in search of certainty. Perhaps, as with other teachers, his importance is essentially historical. Our civilization looks at things differently because of the ideas he presented to it so lucidly and readably, even if the ideas themselves came from his reading rather than his experience. Mr. Collis

does not give any very systematic account of his views. Indeed the quality to which he returns more than once with renewed amazement is his width of reference and size of output. He asks in a puzzled way what he lived on and how it was that whether he were on a cliff-top in Cornwall or in the Australian outback he had available an endless stream of books in foreign languages by scholars little known in England. His conclusion seems to be that there was something supernatural about it, perhaps related to his mysticism.

Mr. Calder-Marshall is, of course, moved by very different aspects of his subject. He is fascinated by eccentrics, so Havelock Ellis takes his place beside Aleister Crowley among the subjects of his sympathetic but ruthless investigations. The tragi-comedy of Ellis's inability to make a successful marriage

for himself while endlessly advising other people on their sex-lives suits him admirably. His narrative is never raucously amused and he admires some aspects of Ellis wholeheartedly; but he makes the deadly comment that most of his writing was based on copying bits out of books. Both these biographers play down the *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*. Mr. Calder-Marshall quotes his wife as saying "His sex books are nothing. He is a poet and a philosopher." He calls the first five volumes "Moral and educational books disguised as science"; but Ellis himself said "Sex, the study of which has been my life work," and one is entitled to expect that biographies of him would quote authoritative views on his place in the history of psychology.

As an essayist, and many of his books are collections of essays under large titles, he has a wonderful even flow, with a Macaulayesque virtuosity in providing odd, interesting illustrations of a theme. But the piling of generalization on generalization and the bland, "helpful" tone are sometimes rather nearer to A. C. Benson than to any "poet and philosopher." In a passage neither biographer quotes, Ellis said "People of sensitive intelligence have often remarked on my 'serenity'" and went on to attribute this to a realization that "a harmonious conflict of opposites rules in nature's operations." It is a shock shortly afterwards to find that this is "all I have been able to achieve in the general attainment of a philosophic credo." This seems much more like a two-thousand-word Georgian essay on "What Life Has Taught Me" than original thinking that has permanently influenced modern thought.

However, if even *Impressions and Comments* has not worn very well, Mr. Collis's moving, stumbling tribute and Mr. Calder-Marshall's amiable account of a preposterous ménage show that Havelock Ellis has not ceased to inspire other writers and to earn gratitude from readers.

— R. G. G. PRICE

NOVEL FACES—LV



H. Wilson



GODFREY WINN

"Fly Away, Youth!" wrote Godfrey Winn. Youth heard,
But only lately took him at his word.

NEW NOVELS

The Pistol. James Jones. Collins, 12/6

From macrocosm to microcosm: in reverse order to that of most novelists' progress the author of *From Here to Eternity* now gives us a long short-story whose surface simplicity fails to disguise the great technical skill with which the chain of incident has been forged and linked together. Mr. Jones's knowledge of U.S. Army procedure and routine, both in peace and war, stems from long experience lacking in most chroniclers of Service life; his opening description of the Japanese attack on Hawaii on December 7, 1941, makes not only a first-class, but first-hand, prologue to the absorbing account of how Pfc. Mast, on guard duty that morning and therefore wearing an Army Issue '45 automatic, decides to retain the weapon against future bisection by an enemy officer's Samurai sabre, doggedly defending it against theft, bribery and violence from other members of his platoon, all of whom are expertly and economically characterized. The vertiginous struggle on a mountainside with the sneering Texan will afford a vicarious shudder to readers afflicted with acrophobia, though it arises naturally from circumstance and is the one sensational set-piece in a work remarkably free from pseudo-toughness, and completely devoid of verbal obscenity.

The Losers. Clifford Irving. Heinemann, 15/-

As American as chewing-gum, the characters in this short novel could exist nowhere save the U.S.A., whose "thousand voices" dinning at the principal figure "to succeed and conform" are partly responsible for the progressive

emptiness and final tragedy of his life. Dave Stern belongs, like Jay Gatsby, to a lost generation (to which being a "veteran" means taking part in the Korean War); and he too has his hopeless love and muddled imperishable dream, with Hudson's Bay representing roughly what Moscow did to Chekov's *Three Sisters*. The narrator, Dave's ambivalent boyhood friend, a second-rate painter turned strip-cartoonist, displays much crypto-subtlety in psychological analysis and a dazzling expertise in conveying atmospheric pressure (New York with the thermometer at ninety-six: a man drops dead right in front of Klein's on 14th Street); and if the emotional temperature seems to a British reader too highly overcharged, who are we to say that things over there are not like this?

No Remittance. Dan Davin. Michael Joseph, 15/-

As a New Zealander of Irish-Catholic parentage Mr. Davin has achieved a considerable feat of objectivity—comparing favourably with those performed by the late Joyce Cary—in identifying himself with a clever but rootless young Englishman who, having blotted his copy-book in the Old Country, emigrates to the New Zealand of the 1900s and marries into a family of puritanical Irish-peasant farmers with unhappy results all round. Dick Kane, relating his own story in retrospect, emerges as a sympathetic figure despite his fundamental weakness and youthful folly (at one point he sinks his savings in a chimerical goldmine located by planchette-board), and the inevitable estrangement between his wife and himself (foreshadowed by the polite hostility of her parents, who are particularly well-drawn) is described

with exactly the amount of understanding and compassion that such a man would be able to muster when looking back over the past. The first-person narrative is easy and colloquial, with much discreetly-conveyed period-detail but no crypto-sentimentality (*cf.* the extremely touching interludes between Dick and the barmaid Ellen, a supremely unselfish woman with whom he would perhaps have been better off), and the book adds up to a thoroughly convincing reconstruction of one man's life, as well as this author's best novel to date.

— J. MACLAREN-ROSS

Turgenev's Literary Reminiscences.

Translated by David Magarshack. With an Essay by Edmund Wilson. Faber, 25/-

Mr. Edmund Wilson's long introductory essay gives an excellent account of Turgenev's life and circumstances, and Mr. David Magarshack's translation adds another volume of Russian literature to the splendid series he is building up for English readers. These autobiographical fragments of Turgenev's are rather a mixed bag; sometimes of great general interest, like the account of the execution of the mass-murderer, Troppmann, witnessed in 1870, or the fire at sea (at which his enemies suggested Turgenev himself had played a somewhat unheroic part); sometimes dealing with relatively minor figures in the Russian literary world, whose doings are chiefly for the specialist in Russian themes. There is a tantalizing glimpse of Pushkin; while the vignette of Lermontov at a ball, sitting in the uniform of the Hussars of the Guard, wearing sabre and gloves, and scowling at the famous beauty in his company, comes completely to life. Mr. Wilson gives just the right amount of background for those who need a reminder about the great Russian novelist, who lived much of his time in Paris and was a friend of Henry James.

— A. P.

The Siege of Plevna. Rupert Furneaux. Blond, 25/-

Eighty years ago Plevna, a dull little Bulgarian town, was world news, for Osman Pasha held out there for nearly five months, halting the Russian drive towards Adrianople. It saw the last battles covered by correspondents uncramped by security—professionals who galloped all through the night to telegraph their stories. On both sides it was a brutal war of astonishing incompetence at the top, but it produced two first-class tactical leaders, Osman himself and General Skobelev. Begun on the pretext of Turkish atrocities in Bulgaria, it ended in a treatment of prisoners that was a greater disgrace to Russia.

Although all this makes an exciting story, it is written with more zest than scholarship. Mr. Furneaux has collected a mass of information and good maps and plates; his narrative is robust, but it



falls easily into the purple patches of a boys' magazine. And by what means is he privileged with the private reveries of long-dead individuals? — E. O. D. K.

Sound of the Sea. Leo Walmsley. Collins, 15/-

Written from the aspect of the school-boy son of a struggling artist at the end of the Victorian era, this latest novel maintains Leo Walmsley's reputation as a writer of human stories drawn from life. It includes in a variety of incident a shipwreck and lifeboat-launching, lobster catching, the rescue of exhausted migratory redwings, overtones of the South African War and an ending on a happy note for the narrator and his family. The characters are dominated by an autocratic vicar whose portrait the artist wants to paint if only he could raise sufficient courage to ask for consent. The rest, from the village bully to the miser who does anything to make money, have their parallels in most small communities. It is this ability to make characters live that makes Mr. Walmsley's novels so absorbing and easy to read.

— A. V.

Georgian Chronicle. Betsy Rodgers. Methuen, 21/-

In this history of five generations of two intertwined Nonconformist families, the Aikins and Jennings, from the Stuart repressions to the repeal of the Test Act, the central figure is the redoubtable Mrs. Barbauld, poet, pamphleteer, moralist and the first serious writer for children. Horace Walpole called her "that virago Barbauld," and Lamb damned "the cursed Barbauld crew" for turning infant minds from fairies to facts; but Johnson praised her as the best of his imitators, and when roused by injustice she wrote good and vigorous prose.

These Dissenters had come some way from Calvin. They drank, went to the theatre and brought up their children sociably; they were also intelligent and courageous, and books flowed from their studies. Miss Rodgers' eighty pages of their unpublished letters give rich glimpses of devoted family life in an expanding England. This is a scholarly book, that might have been more amusing if its author had not been a little infected by the underlying solemnity of her subject.

— E. O. D. K.

PUNCH EXHIBITIONS

An exhibition of fifty years of *Punch* cinema cartoons and caricatures is on view at the Leicester Square Theatre, London, by arrangement with the Rank Organization.

The "*Punch* in the Theatre" Exhibition has started its 1959 tour. It can now be seen at the Guildford Theatre, the Theatre Royal, Windsor, and the Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury.



Josephine—FRANCES CUKA

A Taste of Honey
Geoffrey—MURRAY MELVIN

AT THE PLAY

A Taste of Honey (THEATRE ROYAL, STRATFORD)
Good-bye World (GUILDFORD)

A Taste of Honey, briefly revived at the Theatre Royal, Stratford, will be at Wyndham's by the time this article comes out. It is written by Shelagh Delaney on the very latest lines, dumping a squalid slice of life on the stage and keeping it salted with very uninhibited conversation. Most of the modern ingredients are there—a half-witted heroine of seventeen who is having a baby by a black man, her fading tart of a mother, her pansy boy-friend—all fighting like cats in a ghastly bed-sitting room at Salford.

The characterization is slight, the humour pier-head and the production uncertain of its style. The mother is a parody from a music-hall sketch of a good-time girl near the end of her tether, and as such is briskly played by Avis Bunas; the girl darts from farce to sentiment, and the pansy is a straight part, except when, to brighten the proceedings, he indulges in a little ballet. Some of the characters address the

audience directly, while others don't, and Joan Littlewood has arranged for them to be piped on to the stage by a meaningless little orchestra.

If I could have felt sorrier for the girl I should have been happier, but as she is very nearly a moron her situation is merely regrettable. The play only ceases to be a lucky dip when her mother goes off for a final fling with her awful lover, and the pansy moves in, being fond of the girl and anxious to straighten her affairs. Here Miss Delaney is on firmer ground. He is much the best character, and the scenes in which, lonely and eager, he sensibly prepares for the baby have the pathos for which we have been waiting elsewhere. But the mother returns and throws him out, and we are back in the music-hall again.

Murray Melvin plays him very well, sensitively and without exaggeration. Frances Cuka cannot do very much with such an addle-pated heroine; Clifton Jones is good in the small part of the negro. At times Miss Delaney's harum-scarum dialogue is quite effective, but it sorely needs a less flimsy framework.

There doesn't seem to me much point in writing about the dreary unless the

author can communicate some emotion, and another play which fails to do so is *Good-bye World*, by Bernard Kops, which I saw at the Guildford Rep. Its hero is a teddy-boy, turned gunman, on the run from prison after countless robberies with coshings, sloshings and slashings, and gone to ground in a shabby Paddington boarding-house while he satisfies himself exactly why his mother has killed herself three doors away. I

REP SELECTION

Birmingham Rep, *Hamlet*, unspecified season.
Playhouse, Liverpool, *A Touch of the Sun*, until February 28th.
Guildford Rep, *Verdict*, until February 14th.
Leatherhead Theatre, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, until February 14th.

should have thought the answer was obvious.

It must be possible to convert an audience's natural dislike for this sort of hero into sympathy, but Mr. Kops doesn't do it. The boy's fine feelings for his mother come altogether too late, and though in the end he decides to give himself up and start afresh it has been touch and go for two hours whether he will murder a lot of policemen on his way out. Nothing is added to the study of delinquency, which is anyway obscured by sentiment.

Mr. Kops can write dialogue, but is fond of having only two people on the stage at once, one of whom does the talking, so that his play has little dramatic

interchange and proceeds in a series of jumps. He can create character, but his characters tend to be in water-tight compartments, and leave the play standing; his mad old lady, his blind circus-clown and his philosophic Irishman are all strongly imagined, though the latter's nostalgic agonies are phony. On ten pounds a week and less whisky he could easily do a little travelling.

John Charlesworth was miscast as the gunman, who on his record should have been much tougher, but otherwise Richard Hayter's production was sound. James McLoughlin was particularly good as the Irishman, and there were solid performances from Aimee Delamain as the mad Miss Mead and Alfred Hoffman as the blind man.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Traveller without Luggage and *Madame de . . .* (Arts Theatre Club—4/2/59), exciting Anouilh double-bill. *Valmouth* (Saville—8/10/58), Sandy Wilson's musical from Firkbank. *Danton's Death* (Lyric, Hammersmith—4/2/59), collectors' piece by Büchner (1835).

—ERIC KEOWN

AT THE PICTURES

Fortunella
Party Girl
The Lady is a Square

NOT for its story, which shows signs of commercial contrivance, do I recommend *Fortunella* (Director: Eduardo de Filippo); nor, indeed, for

almost any reason other than the fact that the principal character is played by Giulietta Masina, the superbly funny and touching comedienne of Fellini's *Cabiria* and *La Strada*. "Comedienne" is far too genteel—a word for this actress—she is really a clown, and a wonderful one. And by "commercial contrivance" I mean one gets the impression that this film has been written—and by Fellini, incidentally—to give her every possible comic and pathetic opportunity.

Again, like *Cabiria*, it amounts to a number of episodes. Nanda—"usually referred to as Fortunella," says the synopsis, but I didn't notice that she was called anything but Nanda—is the junior partner and mistress of Peppino, who runs a junk stall in an open-air market in Rome; the licence is in her name, and so it is always she who goes to prison for the firm's misdemeanours. The film opens as she returns from one of these periodical absences to find that Peppino (Alberto Sordi) has replaced her with a young woman he declares to be his cousin. This makes the first episode—a broadly comic one at the end of which the angry Nanda has planted herself literally between them in the bed, still making abusive remarks about them both.

But most of the picture is concerned with her adventures in the company of a carefree and often drunk Professor (Paul Douglas) who has forsaken the academic world and spends his time doing anything he feels like doing—such as jumping into the water for a moonlight swim, or getting into the ring with a wrestler. Each of these occasions makes another episode, with Nanda strongly in evidence. Then comes a hilarious time with a travelling company of actors, who perform in the Professor's tumbledown house . . . There is little point in giving details of the episodes or in examining the tenuous thread of plot that holds them all together. The whole affair is simply a field-day for Giulietta Masina, and—as such—worth while.

I had hopes of *Party Girl* (Director: Nicholas Ray), because Mr. Ray is a director who has done good and interesting things (*Rebel without a Cause*, *In a Lonely Place*, *They Live by Night*), but it proved a disappointment. Its general impression is that of a "B" film given the treatment of an "A."

It is the sort of gangster story in which we might have seen Edward G. Robinson some twenty-five years ago. Now Robert Taylor is the brilliant lawyer who lives in weary and contemptuous style on the fat fees he gets for successfully defending underworld characters he very well knows to be guilty, and Lee J. Cobb is the



Rico Angelo—LEE J. COBB

Louis Canetto—JOHN IRELAND

Vicki Gaye—CYD CHARISSE

[Party Girl

D. A. Gulliver

We record with regret the death of D. A. Gulliver, who contributed to "Charivaria" for many years.

gangster boss. Essentially it is their story, in spite of the title and the fact that we are shown at least two complete song-and-dance numbers by the girl (Cyd Charisse), whose function in the film apart from these is no more than that of the girl in any ordinary thriller—to be rescued.

It is in colour, too; that seems wrong, though it suits the irrelevant musical numbers. Within the limits of the artificial, conventional story, the detail is well done, and Mr. Cobb takes the chance to give a splendid flamboyant performance. To sum up: quite entertaining, but empty.

The Lady is a Square (Director: Herbert Wilcox) is based on the simple-minded old belief that there is some radical difference between "classical" music and popular music, that they must necessarily appeal to quite unreconcilable tastes. True, its climax has both sides listening rapt to the same "classical" work (*Ombra mai fù*, which I first saw quoted as common ground in my school magazine nearly thirty-five years ago), but this familiar and arguable solution is apparently meant to be impressive. Anna Neagle is the serious music-lover, Janette Scott is her gay daughter, Frankie Vaughan is a young pop singer, and there are no surprises. Mr. Vaughan does well in two different styles, Anthony Newley is good and amusing as a Tin Pan Alley song-plugger; but the picture also gives us comic foreigners, comic highbrows, comic workmen, and innumerable well-known jokes including the suspected caviar, the wine snob, the U overdraft, the wet baby, the happy weeping, and many others, and expects to—and does—get laughs with the mere mention of tripe, stout and the Liberal Party (*passim*).

* * * * *

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Two interesting new ones in London, of which more next week: *The Horse's Mouth*, and (at the new Columbia cinema) *Gigi*. There's another day or two of the fine African story *The Roots of Heaven* (28/1/59) and the good Western *The Big Country* (21/1/59). *Room at the Top* (4/2/59) continues, and the amusing French trifle *Parisienne* (7/1/59), and the two by Ingmar Bergman, *Wild Strawberries* (5/11/58) and *Summer with Monika* (24/12/58).

The only new release I would recommend is *The Last Hurrah* (7/1/59).

— RICHARD MALLETT

ON THE AIR

Serious Matters

THE popularity of "Panorama" (BBC) shows no sign of wilting, for the majority of viewers will pay the most hypnotized attention to material on the little screen which they would ignore



LUDOVIC KENNEDY

RICHARD DIMBLEBY

HUW WHELDON

with a flick of the page if it were presented to them as chunks of prose, however informed, in a magazine. With Mr. Dimbleby as its panjandrum, therefore, this programme trundles successfully on, opening windows for us in the close-packed columns of the daily news, frightening us with all the bogey-men it can persuade in front of its cameras, warning us of Things to Come, examining Urgent Problems (with what a portentous frown does Mr. Dimbleby approach a problem!), reaching Few Conclusions, keeping us informed on Current Affairs, shocking us with maps and diagrams and graphs which neatly show the world on the point of falling about our ears week by week, and giving us something to talk about on the train each Tuesday morning. Alas! the Tuesday mornings follow one another so rapidly that the maps merge and mingle in our heads, until we credit one statesman with another's deviltry, and life becomes a breathless, tragic muddle of names and dates and splendour and misery and strange men arriving at London Airport. Perhaps to-day's story can never be more than this until it is cross-referenced and transmuted into history: and by that token "Panorama" probably holds up a not too cloudy mirror.

Mr. Dimbleby, at its centre, has a great sense of occasion, but is inclined to regard every occasion as just slightly more sombre than the last. I'm sure he could introduce a short filmed report about traffic congestion with enough solemnity to send us scurrying into deep shelters with provisions for a month. He can bring a breathless hush of dread into a million homes simply by looking up from the papers on his desk, as the opening music dies reverently away, and pulling his I - don't - know - whether - I - really - ought-to-tell-you-this face. Like that chubby lad in *Pickwick*, he likes to make our flesh creep. He also identifies himself with the average viewer by presenting himself as sensibly conservative in his tastes, or, if need be, as a jovial lowbrow.

He is almost uncomfortably polite, has a holy attitude to the rich and glittering things of life, pronounces most words elaborately and is given to coy little whimsical parting jests to reassure us after the solemn drama of his programme has unfolded. I believe "Panorama" would not be the same without him, as London would not be the same without the Albert Memorial.

The approach of Ludovic Kennedy in "This Week" (A-R) is brisk and clinical by comparison. When necessary, he achieves his atmosphere of urgency by crisp reading or a stern expression. Speed is of the essence here, for there is but half an hour to spare, and even that is interrupted by the gabble and froth of commercials. Usually the show succeeds: it has some of the drive and guts of Fleet Street, and is not afraid of being brash now and again. I think most viewers would welcome a quarter of an hour's extension here.

Channel Nine has not yet found an answer to "Monitor" (BBC). Presided over with earnest charm by Huw Wheldon, this symposium devoted to the arts continues to please a minority, and there are signs that its popularity is gradually spreading. This must be encouraging news, for it was never planned as a solemn magazine of esoteric stodge. The greatest pains are taken to present artistic matters in such a way that the treatment neither blinds the uninitiated with science nor jolts the delicate susceptibilities of the knowing ones by a too "popular" approach. Occasionally the results—especially the filmed reports—are minor works of art in themselves, due to the combined talents of such people as Wheldon, Newington, Schlesinger and Tyrer. "Monitor" is the only programme based on the obvious notion that television is an ideal medium for bringing the arts to the people. For that it should be congratulated: for the tact and liveliness of its method it should be cherished.

— HENRY TURTON

Love Among the Lords

By MONICA FURLONG

LADY WILLIS of Hillingdon (of the seventh batch of Life Peeresses) introduced a practical note into the House of Lords. "If you can't be pretty," her mother had said, eying her sadly in her late teens, "then be domesticated," and Lady Willis it was who noted that the moth had got into the Woolsack. She tabled a motion that during the breeding season it should be kept in a polythene bag with the appropriate chemicals. This tiny incident established her at once as a kind of House Mother, and Lords who wanted to borrow a cigarette or an aspirin got into the habit of turning to her. She in return used to ask them in her jocular way how the half-crowns were coming in or where

the nudists went in the winter. Lady W. was, no other word for it, a wow.

But there, you can't please everybody, and Lady Willis didn't please the Duke of Canterbury. She didn't displease him either. He simply never thought about her at all. The Duke that year was a man with burdens. For one thing he missed his mother (she who eloped to South America with a tin-plate millionaire, you remember. Better tin-plate by the hand than gold plate in the bank, as she remarked to Mr. Hickey at the time). Then of course he had sadly overworked himself opposing the supporters of hanging and birching. For goodness' sake, said the Duke, let's not spoil the ship for a ha'porth of tar. (Like many politicians he was never

stuck for a telling phrase.) Why just hang people when for the taking of a few more pains you could draw and quarter them as well? Why simply birch juvenile delinquents when in the end flaying alive was going to be more persuasive? Let's not be *soft*, said the Duke. He got quite worked up over the whole thing and there were days when a tease only had to say "Think of the old ladies living alone" for him practically to have a seizure.

But the Duke was not a man to martyr himself in one direction if he could do it simultaneously in two. He had fallen hopelessly in love with Bernadette Johnson, the daughter of a Labour peer (she was named for Bernard Shaw, you remember). She returned his love, and no one could have asked for a more delicately or expensively nurtured girl (though some might have asked for a prettier one), but in the heat of a lover's tiff she refused to become a founder-member with him of the P.F.D.S. (the Peine Forte, et Dure Society) and he never forgave her. Not noticing that the population now numbers more men than women he hot-headedly forswore Bernadette's company.

Orphaned, celibate, penologically blocked, the Duke realized he was not feeling quite the thing that year, and that his psychosomatic hang-nails were definitely worse. Still, nature must be served, a dukedom must have heirs, and no one is going to put up with thwarted love indefinitely. Romance was afoot in the Lords that spring, a breath of excitement stirred the dust on the old benches, birds were nesting on the scaffolding outside the window, and the Chancellor, slipping about on his polythene throne, noticed uneasily that everyone was awake. Battle-scarred old veteran that he was he knew at once that drama was in the wind. The Duke of Canterbury was in his place doodling gallows in his diary all over the Twenty-First Sunday after Trinity when Lady Willis, punctual to her usual hour, entered the Chamber and made her way to a seat on the other side of the House.

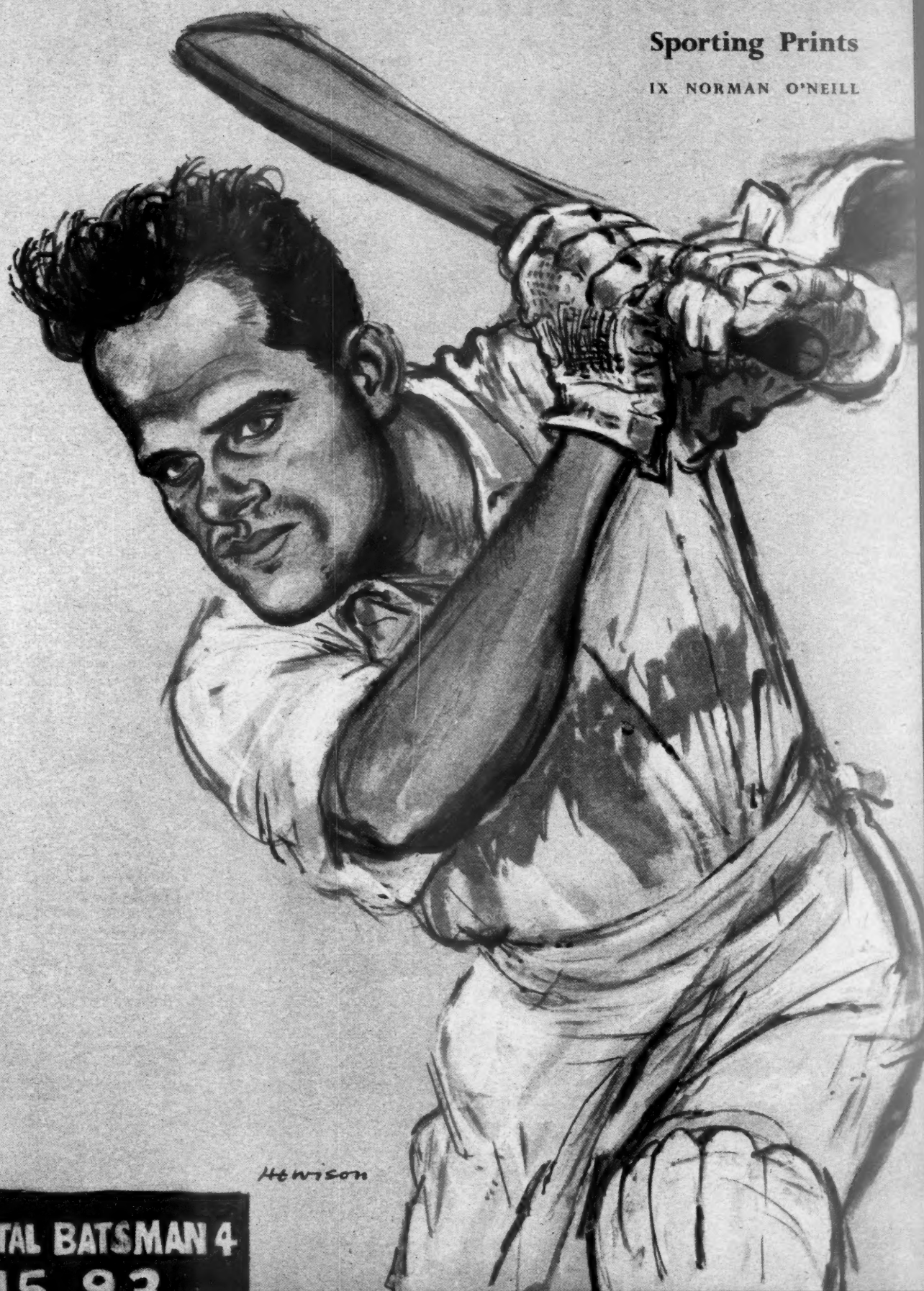
As she sat down there was a stir on the benches near her and it was noticeable that an envelope (unused actually)



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was being passed along the ranks of lords. Eventually the lord nearest to Lady Willis passed it to her and with all eyes upon her she tugged at the heavy wax seal. There was a flutter of pink—something fell to the floor (a confection of silk and cardboard) and Lady Willis discovered she was the recipient of her first Valentine. Naturally she was pleased but went pink and looked extremely put out. Holding it at arm's length, just as if it did not scent the whole room with attar of roses, she tore it across and dropped it (for want of anywhere better and not to get fined £10 under the Litter Act) into her brief-case. Her neighbour, a man who had, often, neither accurately nor amusingly, described her as the Rich Man's Edana Romney, picked up the discarded envelope and, holding it up to his rheumy old eyes, scrutinized the fractured seal. "Canterbury," he declared suddenly in loud tones, and all eyes were raised to the dreaming Duke. His dismay was evident. Taking in the whole scene at one glance he sprang to his feet, turned a deep red and left the Chamber. Lady Willis followed and they met on the stairs.

"What on earth is going on?" she asked him with the candour which had almost wrecked her career in the Civil Service.

"I haven't the faintest," he said.

"But . . . Your Grace, I don't want to quibble, but isn't this your seal?"

"I suppose it is. Yes. I must have sent it then." He thought for a bit. He had never in his life had nous enough to send anyone a Valentine, but since someone had bothered to send Lady Willis one and put his seal on it he thought he might as well cash in. Lady Willis's looks would not set the Thames on fire, it was true, but if someone else was rash enough to do so she would know how to summon the Fire Brigade. Seeing her as if for the first time, he realized that she had her finger on the pulse of human affairs. She understood the things that really mattered, like taxes (she was an alumnus of the Death Duty Department), and moths, and morning-after medicaments.

"I will be open with you, Lady Willis," he said. "I am anxious to marry—the tenants expect it, you know—and I thought . . . well . . . you would do as well as anyone else." Lady Willis found this irresistible, but simulated a fairness of mind she was very far from feeling.

"What about Bernadette Johnson? Your passion for her is common property." (This was true—Canterbury had mutilated the entire Palace of Westminster with her initials and his penknife.)

The Duke gave no answer but turned on her a rather searching expression. "Lady Willis," he said reasonably, "what are *your* views about the treatment of criminals?"

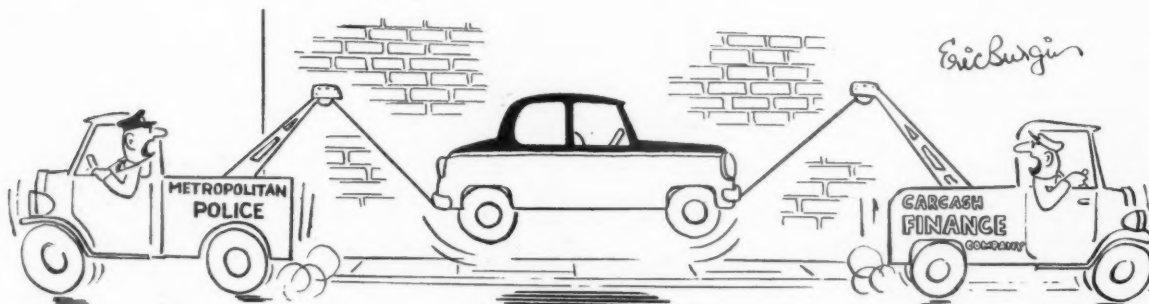
Lady Willis was not a woman of the

world for nothing and she realized at once that she was on a glutinous wicket. Undismayed she blushed and fluttered her eyelashes.

"I have always believed that a woman should think in these matters the same way as her husband," she said demurely, dropping her brazen voice at least a dozen decibels, and gazing up admiringly into the Duke's eyes (she was standing on a lower stair than he was, I need hardly say).

By general consent it was one of the prettiest weddings ever to come out of Westminster. Lord Gleneagles was Best Man and there was a Guard of Honour formed by the P.F.D.S., each carrying a symbolic weight. The Duke, well-preserved for his thirty years, looked surprisingly cheerful, and Lady Willis, only forty after all, struck a purposeful note with her brief-case and felt hat. They were back within the year with a candidate for baptism.

It was not until many years later that the Duchess, picking over her souvenirs one day, discovered that if one turned the envelope the right way up the lion on the seal was not after all courant (*à la* Canterbury) but rampant (*à la* Gleneagles). Poor Gleneagles. Only the week before the incident of the Valentine she had, she remembered, prescribed milk to clean his patent leather boots. But there, she reflected as she snipped at the roses with her secateurs, that was politics for you. A dirty business.



"He's overparked by ten minutes!"

"His instalment's overdue by three days!"

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Reg'd at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper. Entered as 2nd-class Mail Matter at the New York, N.Y., P.O., 1903. Postage of this issue: Gt. Britain and Eire 2½d.; Canada 1d.* Elsewhere Overseas 3½d.† Mark Wrapper top left-hand corner * "Canadian Magazine Post" † "Printed Papers—Reduced Rate."

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